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COLUMN

☕ COFFEE: What You Order Makes a Difference

By Frank Gallo

I like coffee. I drink a lot of it, and luckily, my travels have taken me to many countries where coffee is grown from Jamaica's Blue Mountains to the highlands of Columbia, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. I've seen coffee grown in rich mountain forests teaming with birds and other life, and in sun-soaked plantations devoid of nearly all but the coffee. The difference between the two coffee cultivation methods is striking in terms of biodiversity. Why such a difference? Grap a cup and let's dive in.

What is coffee?

Coffee, specifically (Coffea arabica), is a small shrub thought to originate in Ethiopia. It grows predominantly in the shade of a forest tree canopy, typically between 2,600ft and 6,550ft above sea level. Coffee is grown in more than 50 countries within a latitudinal band between 25°N and 30°S of the Equator known as the "Bean Belt that has the ideal climate for growing coffee. Hawaii is the only state that produces coffee commercially.

Although there are more than 130 species and many varieties and cultivars, primarily two are grown commercially, Arabica, and Robusta (C. canephora), and account for roughly 70% and 30% of global coffee cultivation, respectively. More sun tolerant Robusta coffee is from the African Congo and generally considered lower quality coffee than Arabica.

What's the difference between shade- and sun-grown coffee?

Conventionally, coffee is cultivated under a native tree canopy in full to moderate shade, with some forest understory cleared for farming, but still retains a diverse plant and animal community.

In the mid-1970s, the U.S. worked with Costa Rica to develop sun-tolerant Arabica coffee, partly in response to leaf rust that attacks coffee, and to increase production to meet growing demand; coffee grown in full sun ripens faster and has higher yields than coffee grown in shade. USAID and local governmental agencies convinced many farmers to adopt sun-tolerant coffee cultivation, leading to a shift in coffee production practices worldwide, and the loss of roughly 2.5 million acres of rainforest in Central America. Although sun-grown production yields increase, there is a downside. Sun-grown coffee cultivation is more susceptible to erosion and may be unsustainable. It requires the substantial use of pesticides, fertilizer, and other chemicals, which often negatively impact on the environment, and small farmers who cannot afford them nor protect themselves from



A shade-grown coffee plantation in Blue Mountain, Jamaica.



From bottom left, counterclockwise: Ripe coffee cherries (red fruit); raw coffee; dried coffee; roasted coffee (upper left)

their use. Coffee grown in sun is a monoculture; not much else lives in a sun-grown plantation.

In Contrast, shade-grown coffee plantations provide important habitat for a wide range of mammals and native and migratory birds. As many as 184 bird and 28 mammal species are known to utilize them. Shade-grown farms also support pollinators, such as bees, butterflies, moths, and bats, and maintain populations of reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates that help control coffee crop pests, reducing the need for chemicals. The forest canopy helps to filter and retain water mitigating drought conditions, stores carbon, stabilizes and enriches the soil, providing soil nutrients from leaf decomposition, reducing or eliminating the need for fertilizers.

With increased public awareness, the demand for "specialty" shade-grown and organic coffees has continued to increase dramatically in the US over the past few decades. However, the area of land used for

non-shade Arabica and Robusta coffee has grown at a much faster rate. Sun-grown Robusta cultivation has exploded in Asia to meet global demand. Robusta is often mixed with Arabica coffee to make instant and budget coffee blends to lower costs and provides a more balanced taste. It is used in espresso because of its stronger flavor, and in energy drinks due to its higher caffeine content. Vietnam, the world's second largest coffee producer (17%), is the leading grower of Robusta.

Most (80%) of the worlds Arabica beans, and just over half the world's coffee are grown in Latin America, with Brazil and Colombia, the planet's first (40%) and third (8%) largest coffee producers, respectively, accounting for most of it.

Unfortunately, with the trend toward sun-grown coffee cultivation to meet increasing demand, coffee farming is driving deforestation, which research shows causes decreased rainfall that may lead to drought, negatively affecting coffee

production, communities, and farmers.

According to the organization Coffee Watch, "more than 1,200 square miles of forest were cleared for coffee cultivation in Brazil's coffee-growing regions between 2001 and 2023," creating what their director, Etelle Higonnet, called "a Honduras-sized hole in Brazilian forests." Adding, "overall, in areas with high concentrations of coffee cultivation, more than 42,000 square miles of forest has been felled either directly for coffee production or indirectly for infrastructure."

Climate change is also affecting farmers worldwide due to rising temperatures, irregular rainfall, and periods of severe drought which negatively impact coffee yields, depressing the income of often impoverished farmers according to Fairtrade America. Recently, replanting shade trees in Kenya has helped to mitigate some of these negative effects.

What does shade-grown really mean?

There are different levels of complexity to shade grown plantations:

Diverse Shade or "rustic" coffee is planted within native forest with at least 40% canopy cover. It produces lower coffee yields, but has the least negative environmental impact, with limited pesticide or other chemical use. Most coffee in India is grown this way.

Traditional polyculture, much like rustic planting, also utilizes original forest, leaving a varied native canopy intact. Other beneficial plants used for medicine, food (nut and fruit trees), fuel, or lumber, are planted alongside the coffee.

Commercial polyculture creates a two-level system, coffee and canopy, by removing more foliage, epiphytes, and trees to add more coffee and valuable tree varieties, thus lowering diversity to increase coffee yields. Fertilizers and pesticides may be necessary.

The difference between the two coffee cultivation methods is striking in terms of biodiversity.

Scant shade, or shade monoculture uses 1-2 pruned commercially valuable shade trees, such as banana, cacao, or mahogany, above more densely planted coffee. Such farms focus on market-based products. Chemicals are often required.

Unshaded monoculture coffee is grown in full sun without a canopy to increase yields to meet growing demand but needs high inputs of chemicals at a greater ecological cost.

Certifications

The highest ecological coffee standard is the SMBC (Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center) Bird Friendly® Seal, which certifies that a coffee is shade-grown organic and bird friendly (Min 40% shade cover).



Another environmentally friendly certification is the Rainforest Alliance® seal which requires farmers to use sustainable farming practices to protect forests, wildlife, water, and soil (Min15% shade cover).



There are Organic certifications, such as USDA, which require farmers not to use pesticides and other toxic chemicals protecting groundwater and farmer's health.



And there's Fairtrade®, which trains and aids farmers in producing crops in a responsible and sustainable way. Many, but not all of which grow organic coffee in shade, but not always.



Where is shade-grown coffee grown and where can I buy it?

Although it's difficult to find precise percentages for every country, there are

several countries that produce predominantly traditional shade-grown and often organic coffees, including Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, and Nicaragua. Hawaiian coffee is usually shade-grown. Other countries that produce large percentages of shade-grown or organic coffee include Peru, Honduras, Colombia, Kenya, and Mexico, especially in the southern states.

Five Bird Friendly® coffee brands certified by SMBC are Java Planet, Royale Coffee Company, Birds and Beans Coffee, ABA (American Birding Association) Songbird Coffee, and Dean's Beans Bird-Friendly® Coffee. Other brands are also available. Bird Friendly® coffee generally commands a premium price but also helps protect wildlife and farmers.

Locally, Zumbach's Gourmet Coffee in New Canaan has a variety of delicious organic coffees and is collaborating with New Canaan Nature Center to create a shade-grown organic Nature Center blend.

Many Wild Birds Unlimited and Whole Food stores sell Bird Friendly® coffee, and The Audubon Shop in Madison offers a specialty shade-grown organic Costa Rican coffee. Aldi's sells two inexpensive whole-bean Honduran and Peruvian organic coffees.

If you prefer decaffeinated coffee, Costco sells premium whole-bean Swiss water-processed shade-grown organic coffees. They are sold in bulk online from Ruta Maya, and Mayorga, along with their Kirkland organic Columbian (also available in stores).

Aside from the fact that shade-grown organic coffee is more environmentally friendly and safer for farmers, it tastes better. Because it takes longer for the fruit to mature on the plant, the beans develop a higher oil and sugar content and thus make a more flavorful brew. Give it a try and see what you think. A little change in your morning routine can make a big difference.

Frank Gallo is the Senior Naturalist at the New Canaan Nature Center, where he leads environmental education programs, wildlife research, and citizen science initiatives that connect the community to the natural world. A seasoned birder, field biologist, and educator, Frank brings decades of experience in conservation and environmental outreach across Connecticut.



Shade-grown Coffee, Blue Mountains, Jamaica



Unripe coffee



Ripe coffee



Shade-grown coffee



# Uncork the Holidays

By CARL FRANCO

As we make our way through the holiday season, some festivities are already in full swing and others looming ahead. But whether you are an organized planner or a “fly by the seat of your pants” person, the one common theme is that you’re going to need wine and spirits. If you’re hosting, you’ll need a little party-planning advice. If you’re attending, you’ll need a proper hostess gift. And if you’re swearing off gatherings entirely and channeling your inner Scrooge, well, you can still enjoy a bottle by the fire while you wait for Jacob Marley to materialize.

As you plan your big celebration, holiday dinner, quiet night, or gift list, it all starts with the advice I’ve offered before: find a wine shop that works within your comfort zone. Once you have that, everything else becomes much easier. And as you explore the recommendations below, keep in mind that many of these wines are available to taste during at our Weekly Wine Tasting we host every Friday and Saturday afternoon in our store, and a perfect opportunity to discover your next favorite bottle.

### The Big Party

If you’re throwing a big Gatsby-style open-house bash with 100-plus guests, the inevitable question becomes, “How much booze do I need?” If there are X glasses of wine in a case and your headcount is Y, but Y represents the guests who prefer spirits, it can start to feel like one of those grade-school math problems with trains leaving Chicago and New York at different speeds. This is exactly where your wine expert steps in to do the heavy lifting.

While there are plenty of variables, some predictable and others not, when it comes to what guests will drink and how much, the right wine shop will help you navigate all of that. They’ll build in a little cushion into your order so you don’t find yourself running out mid-party. And most reputable shops will gladly take back any unopened, saleable bottles, making it easy to order with confidence and ensure you have just a bit more than you think you’ll need. Also, any well-stocked shop will have price points at several different levels and will help you keep things in budget.

### Holiday Gift Giving

Gift Giving is another category

that can stress people out, especially if your wine knowledge tops out at “red or white.” Once again, the key is guidance. Simple gift-giving is always appreciated, and it never hurts to keep a case of wine on hand for last-minute needs. It might be your dedicated mail carrier, the delivery driver who reliably brings your packages, or the refuse crew hauling away those empty boxes. A thoughtful gesture goes a long way, and it doesn’t have to break the bank. You can always find a variety of value-driven wines like the Aquamarine Sauvignon Blanc or the Masciarelli Montepulciano at Francos.



Heading to a holiday party or buying for someone who isn’t a serious collector but still enjoys a good bottle? The \$25–\$35 range will offer plenty of strong options at a quality wine shop. This is where stores that work with small producers really shine. These wineries often deliver the best value, with confident craftsmanship and sustainable, organic, or low-intervention practices in both the vineyard and the cellar. Don’t get lured in by the big commercial brands stacked in every store when your wine merchant can guide you to something far better. Stop into my shop and you’ll see choices like Domaine Schaller Chablis, Monte Real Rioja Reserva, and Podere Casanova Rosso di Montepulciano.



If you’ve got a serious collector on your list, trusted guidance becomes even more important. When you’re considering a \$500

to \$5,000 gift, you want to be sure the bottle truly aligns with the recipient’s taste and style. This is not the moment to walk into a shop eager to push its priciest labels. You should leave feeling confident that you’ve chosen the right wine for the right person.

At Francos this season, those searching for wines with real bottle age will find Anselma Barolo in the 2011, 2016, and 1999 vintages. If there’s a Sauternes lover on your list, the 2005 Château d’Yquem is an undeniably extraordinary gift. And if you’re looking to make a truly lasting impression, our exclusive three- and six-bottle cases are the pinnacle of collector indulgence. Offer something remarkable with selections like the 2016 Château L’Evangile or 2016 Château Angélus, each presented in its classic six-bottle wooden case, or explore California through the 2016 BOND Estate three-bottle sets, sourced from distinguished vineyard sites and also housed in elegant wooden boxes. These are just a few of the standout choices available to collectors this season.



### It’s a Wonderful Dinner

Holiday menus can run the full gamut. Some of us stick with the tried-and-true ham or turkey dinners, while others get ambitious with a Feast of the Seven Fishes or an always-impressive Beef Wellington. And then there are those who harken back to merry old England and roast a goose. Whatever your menu, your trusted wine shop will have the right pairing for the occasion.



A selection of wonderful wines worthy of a holiday feast.



For seafood-focused meals, consider the 2024 Il Bergo Gavi or the 2024 Casa D’Ambra Leninfé. Beef lovers may gravitate toward bolder selections like the 2019 Château Gloria, 2019 Château Pédesclaux, or the 2022 The Conspirator Cabernet, or head over to Italy with the 2023 Sassalloro. Ham and turkey pair beautifully with options such as the 2022 Trimbach Pinot Blanc, 2024 Nicolas Delfaud Mâcon-Verzé, or the 2021 Résonance Chardonnay. However your menu evolves, there are always wines that will not only complement and elevate the meal but also add a touch of elegance while accommodating everything from budget to personal taste.

### The Other Side of the Bar

Bourbon, Rye, Single Malt Scotch, Tequila are all popular spirits. But if you decide to stray from the run of the mill choices everyone is always looking for, you can discover some truly interesting options. If a shop offers nothing beyond the predictable lineup, keep in mind there’s always somewhere you can discover something exceptional.

Cynar, Chartreuse, Velvet Falernum, Amaro, Crème de Violette, all those obscure liqueurs that you may have never seen or

heard of but now you need them for a signature cocktail? Well they are always available at Francos.



### Keeping Kosher



Keeping kosher during the holidays is never a problem. There are a wide variety of wines, not just “kosher wines,” but good wines that happen to be kosher. Producers today are making some truly impressive bottles, from crisp whites to bold reds. Whether you’re setting the holiday table, bringing a host gift, or just stocking up for the season, you’ll find plenty of options that meet kosher guidelines without asking you to compromise on flavor, quality, or style. And if you’re not sure where to start, the right shop will point you in the right

direction.

### Non-Alc? Non problème

It can’t be ignored, the Non-Alcoholic movement has made its mark and is here to stay. The good news is that the offerings have improved immensely. I’ll admit, I still haven’t found a NA spirit I like enough to carry, but there are some out there. However, the wines, pre-mixed cocktails, sparklers, and spritzes I have found have much to offer these days. So as you plan your party or gathering, keep in mind that some guests may not drink, or may not be drinking that night and it’s always nice to have a selection of offerings to make them feel included.

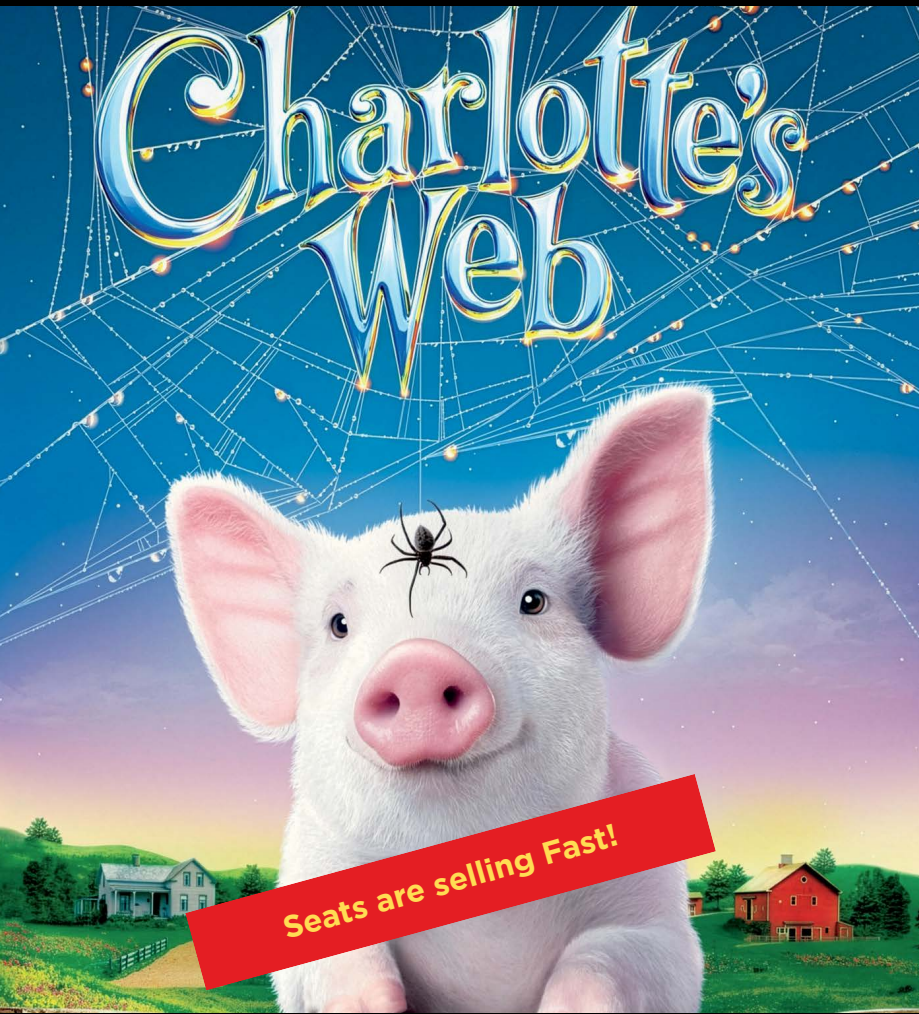


### The Final Pour

At the end of the day, whether you’re planning a party, navigating a gift list, or finding wines for your holiday table, wine and spirits shopping doesn’t have to be stressful. The right shop with the right person behind the counter can make all the difference. Building a relationship with a knowledgeable wine merchant ensures every gift, dinner party, and celebration is a success. This season, give yourself the gift of confidence and let your wine merchant guide your sleigh tonight.

Carl Franco is the proprietor of Francos Wine Merchants

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Town Hall for the Holidays

# When what to my wondering eyes should appear, but wreaths and gnomes everywhere!

Members of the New Canaan Beautification League (NCBL) and the New Canaan Garden Club (NCGC) gathered on November 19th at the New Canaan Nature Center to create the 36 wreaths and eight gnomes that decorate our town for the holidays. This collaboration between the two organizations has been thriving since 1976. “Every year, our members look forward to working with our NCBL friends to make the beautiful wreaths and always popular gnomes. This year we had over 60 members, ages 40 to 89, from the two

clubs. It is the perfect way to get in the holiday spirit,” said NCGC Co-President Dao Engle. “We are very grateful to the Department of Public Works for their help year after year and to the New Canaan Nature Center for hosting us. This kind of collaboration is what makes New Canaan such a special place,” added NCGC Co-President Olivia English. NCBL President Nancy Malling expressed her happiness: “It’s wonderful to see everyone here, working side by side, because volunteers are the key to our success.”

The collaboration begins in June, securing the date and the Nature Center. The day before the workshop, everyone drops off the greens and both clubs come together to sort them by type. This helps speed along the creation process the next day. Members gather in two, two-hour shifts. After 49 years (yes, next year is 50!), it’s a well-oiled process with time for laughter and friendship.

The two groups would also like to thank Janet Schmidt for her abundance of holly, as well as

the town of New Canaan, Peter Aitken, Marianne Grandin, Hutchinson Tree Company, and Copia Home and Garden for donating beautiful greenery. Coffee donated by Zumbach’s helped keep everyone warm. The joy of the holidays—and especially the joy of being a New Canaan resident—was evident as cheerful hands and broad smiles filled the room. Both groups extend their healthy and happy holiday wishes along with gratitude to all who make this work possible.





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COMMISSION  
CONTINUED From Page 1

school’s growth pressures.

Town Council member urges broad review

Christina Ross, a Town Council member speaking “as an individual,” urged the commission to benchmark New Canaan’s charter against other well-managed Fairfield County towns. Ross’s recommendations emphasized term limits, separation of powers, stronger ethics rules, and clearer role definitions.

Among her specific suggestions:

- Study expanding the Board of Selectmen from three to five members.
- Reconsider whether the First Selectman should sit as a voting member of the Board of Finance.
- Clarify job descriptions and responsibilities for elected and appointed officials.
- Evaluate term limits for all offices.
- Review the Board of Finance’s size, appointment vs. election method, chair structure, and its authority over fund transfers.
- Reassess the Treasurer’s reporting line and whether the position should remain elected.
- Consider splitting P&Z into administrative and permitting bodies due to workload.

Ross said these changes could improve “conflicts of interest, transparency, clarity, efficiency, and responsiveness to the taxpayers.”

Online speakers reinforce themes

Zoom participants largely echoed the themes of accountability and structure. Andrew Brooks said independent financial oversight has proven valuable, citing past “material weaknesses” and pointing to recent troubles in other towns without an independent treasurer. Brooks supported elected P&Z and a shift toward more elected positions overall. He also backed expanding the Board of Selectmen to

five members, saying the current three-member structure complicates informal discussion under Connecticut’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Denise Luccarelli said she joined mainly to learn what the charter review might address but stressed that New Canaan’s growth demands more checks and balances, arguing the town is no longer “small, quaint” and needs officials to be held accountable at the ballot box.

Betty Lavastik, who attended the charter revision process a decade ago, supported a five-member selectmen board, elected P&Z, wetlands and finance boards, and also urged the commission to consider longer terms and stricter term limits. She noted that Wilton uses four-year terms for some offices and limits most elected officials (except the First Selectman) to two consecutive full terms, a model she said could broaden participation and reduce entrenched leadership.

After no further hands were raised in the room or online, the hearing portion closed.

Commission begins its work plan

Following the public hearing, the commission moved into a special meeting to organize its process. Members approved minutes from their Nov. 18 kickoff meeting and unanimously adopted a schedule for future sessions.

The commission heard from former Charter Revision Commission Chair Dave Hunt, who led the last revision in 2015–16. Hunt stressed the importance of independent legal counsel when recommendations may affect officials who control the town attorney’s employment. He recounted that the prior commission eventually hired outside counsel to handle a FOIA complaint. He also warned that state law heavily constrains what towns can change in a charter, making experienced legal guidance important.

Hunt urged caution about converting appointed boards to elected ones, saying New Canaan historically attracts highly qualified residents who will serve but may not campaign for office. “Walk carefully on changing things from appointed to elected,” he said, while acknowledging that the decision is fundamentally a policy choice for the

current commission.

FOIA rules shape interviews

Town attorney Nick Bamonte advised commissioners that any small-group interviews or subcommittee assignments would count as meetings under FOIA if they are directed by the commission and used to gather information for later reporting. Such meetings must be publicly noticed and open. Emails sent to commissioners about charter business are public records, he said.

Commissioners discussed the tension between transparency and the desire to hear candid input from officials or residents who may be uncomfortable speaking publicly. Bamonte said anonymous emails can be accepted but still become public records and may carry less weight without attribution.

Survey planned; consultant idea debated

To broaden public input beyond meetings, the commission voted to draft a public survey. Commissioners Jennifer Holme and Karen Willett volunteered to prepare a draft for the next meeting. First Selectman Dionna Carlson offered to promote it through town communications.

Commissioners also debated whether to retain a charter-revision consultant in addition to legal counsel. Several members — including Todd Lampert, William Parrett and Judy Neville — favored at least researching consultants who specialize in charter work, emphasizing that attorneys can rule on legality but should not steer policy. Others, including Chris LeBris and Angela Jameson, were skeptical of consultants’ value and cost, urging the commission to rely on its own research unless a specific need arises.

Chair Corbet summarized the emerging approach: commissioners will divide the charter’s 21 articles among study teams, publicly notice all interviews, and use the survey and public comment to identify town-wide themes such as elections vs. appointments, term limits, and board structure.

The commission’s next meeting is scheduled December 16th, when assignments, interview lists, draft budget and the draft survey will be reviewed.

# New Canaan Elementary School Marks 75 Years of Learning and Community!

This year, New Canaan’s South Elementary School is proud to celebrate its 75th anniversary of educating and inspiring generations of students. Since opening its doors in September 1950, the school has been a cornerstone of the community, shaping the lives of thousands of children and serving as a gathering place for families, staff, and neighbors alike.

Preparations for celebrating this milestone have gotten underway, and will start with a community holiday Sing-A-Long on Friday, December 19th, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. All of New Canaan is invited, but we would really love to

have alumni, former faculty, staff, and parents of South School join our current school community for this event. The sing-a-long will take place in the Gower Road parking lot. If you are going to attend, please complete this brief form so we have an idea of how many people will be joining us South School 75th Anniversary Sing-A-Long RSVP or email us at Southschool75@ncps-k12.org and let us know how many people will be attending. Please RSVP by Friday December 12th.

Additionally, the school is reaching out to the community for help in commemorating its history. Organizers are especially interested in

old photographs, memorabilia, yearbooks, or personal stories from alumni, former staff, and longtime residents. These treasures will help showcase the school’s rich history and the many memories created over the past seven and a half decades.

“This is a celebration for the whole New Canaan community,” said Matt Kascak, current principal of South School. “We want to honor our past, celebrate our present, and look ahead to the future—and we’d love for families, alumni, and neighbors to be part of that process.”

Anyone with photographs, artifacts, or

suggestions for commemorative events is encouraged to contact the school office at 203-594-4300 or by email at Southschool75@ncps-k12.org. We would love to create a display of photographs and artifacts, and we will return all items at the end of the school year.

As South School turns 75, it remains dedicated to the same mission it had at its founding: to provide a strong foundation for students and nurture a lifelong love of learning.

## Award-Winning CNN Journalist Arwa Damon Brings Powerful Documentary “Seize the Summit” to New Canaan. Special screening and Q&A features inspiring story of war survivors climbing Mount Kilimanjaro

The New Canaan Playhouse will host a special screening of the

documentary *Seize the Summit* on December 4, 2025, at 7:15 p.m., followed by a discussion and

Q&A with award-winning journalist and INARA founder Arwa Damon and Blossom Hill Founder & Executive Director Shiva Sarram.

*Seize the Summit* chronicles the extraordinary journey of four young war survivors—from Syria,

Afghanistan, and Ukraine—as they unite to climb Mount Kilimanjaro and take a powerful stand against war. The documentary captures their thrilling ascent up Africa’s highest peak while revealing profound lessons about resilience, hope, and the universal impact of armed conflict on young lives.

The film follows Safa, who bears the physical and emotional scars of Syria’s brutal conflict;

Adnan, who has been wheelchair-bound since being shot at age 14; Shaqayeq, who was born in war-torn Afghanistan; and Tania, who narrowly escaped Ukraine. Their stories converge

on the slopes of Kilimanjaro in a testament to the human spirit’s capacity to overcome even the most devastating circumstances.

Arwa Damon, who left her 17-year career at CNN to create this passion project, will be on hand to share insights into the making of the documentary and the lives it represents. All proceeds from the film benefit INARA, a charity dedicated to supporting children impacted by war and disaster.

This is a rare opportunity for the community to witness an unforgettable story of courage and healing while engaging in meaningful conversation about the young lives forever changed by conflict around the world.

Tickets are limited and selling fast. Attendees are encouraged to purchase tickets immediately to secure their seats for this must-see documentary event. Buy your tickets NOW!

EVENT DETAILS:

- What: *Seize the Summit* documentary screening with Q&A
- When: December 4, 2025, at 7:15 p.m.

- Where: New Canaan Playhouse, New Canaan, CT

INARA founder) and Shiva Sarram (Blossom Hill Founder & Executive

- Featuring: Arwa Damon (filmmaker, Director)

THE PLAYHOUSE



Q&A

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, the Board of Selectmen, at its regular meeting on November 18, 2025 approved the following Schedule of Fees to become effective March 1, 2026:			
Town of New Canaan - Waveny House Rentals			
	Existing		
House Rental - Resident	December-March	April, July, August and November	May, June September and October
Friday	\$4,000	\$6,000	\$6,500
Saturday	\$4,500	\$6,500	\$7,500
Sunday	\$4,000	\$6,000	\$6,500
House Rental - Non Resident	December-March	April, July, August and November	May, June September and October
Friday	\$5,000	\$7,000	\$7,500
Saturday	\$5,500	\$8,000	\$8,500
Sunday	\$5,000	\$7,000	\$7,500
Walled Garden \$500			
Rehearsal (after closing) \$125/hour			
Rental Bond \$2,000			
Deposit (Non Refundable) \$2,500			
Recreation Fees			
Revenue/Fee Name	Purpose of Fee/Description	Fee Amount	Fee Amount
		FY 26	FY 27
Waveny Pool Fees	Resident Family Pass	\$495	\$495
	Non-Resident Family Pass	\$1,350	\$1,450
	Resident Individual Pass	\$205	\$205
	Senior Citizen / Veteran Pass	\$80	\$80
	Nanny Pass	\$140	\$150
	Guest Fee Adult	\$15	\$15
	Guest Fee Youth	\$15	\$15
	Bulk Guest Ticket	10-\$120	10-\$120
Kiwanis Permit	Family Permit	\$30	\$50
	Non Resident Family	\$135	\$135
	Individual Permit	\$25	\$30
	Senior Citizen / Veteran Pass	Free	Free
	Guest Fee	\$15	\$15
Waveny Paddle Tennis Fees	Resident Family Pass	\$300	\$300
	Resident Adult Pass	\$140	\$160
	Senior Citizen / Veteran Pass	\$80	\$80
	Resident Youth Pass	\$35	\$35
	Guest Fee	\$15	\$15
Mead Park Tennis Court Pass	Resident Family Pass	\$300	\$300
	Resident Adult Pass	\$140	\$160
	Senior Citizen / Veteran Pass	\$80	\$80
	Resident Youth Pass	\$35	\$35
	Non Resident Permit	\$250	\$250
	Guest Fee	\$15	\$15
Mead Park Pickle Ball Pass	Resident Family Pass	\$300	\$300
	Resident Adult Pass	\$140	\$160
	Senior Citizen / Veteran Pass	\$80	\$80
	Resident Youth Pass	\$35	\$35
	Guest Fee	\$15	\$15

LEGAL AD

NOTICE OF  
REPUBLICAN TOWN COMMITTEE CAUCUS

The New Canaan Republican Town Committee (RTC) hereby gives notice that New Canaan Republicans will hold a caucus on Monday, January 12, 2026 at 7p.m. at New Canaan Town Hall for the purpose of endorsing members of the RTC for the March 2026 to March 2028 term.

Beginning on Friday, December 12, 2025, registered New Canaan Republicans interested in being candidates for membership on the RTC may obtain their petition forms by sending an email request to [chairman@newcanaanrepublicans.org](mailto:chairman@newcanaanrepublicans.org). All completed petitions must be submitted no later than 12 p.m. on Saturday, December 27, 2025. Please refer to [www.newcanaanrepublicans.org](http://www.newcanaanrepublicans.org) for more information and the RTC by-laws.

REPUBLICAN TOWN COMMITTEE

LEGAL AD

TOWN OF NEW CANAAN  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 this hearing is scheduled as a hybrid meeting to be held in the Town Meeting Room at Town Hall, 77 Main Street at 7:00 p.m. with access available in person or via an on-line system to hear and decide the application(s) as follows:

1. 223 Michigan Road - Upon application of Amy Zabetakis, Rucci Law Group, LLC, Authorized Agent for PelagicOne, LLC, owner(s) for Special Permit approval pursuant to Section(s) 6.4 for after the fact soil disturbance greater than 10,000sq ft. and regrading of land at 223 Michigan Road (Map 34, Block 38, Lot 52) in the Four Acre Zone.

2. 1124 Valley Road (Parcel B, as noted on Map 7816 on the New Canaan Land Records) - Upon application of Amy Zabetakis, Rucci Law Group, LLC, Authorized Agent for New Canaan Land Conservation Trust, Inc, owner(s) for Special Permit approval pursuant to Section(s) 3.2 and 7.7 to establish a philanthropic use as the principal use on the property and to designate the structure as historic in exchange for setback dimensional relief to facilitate the rehabilitation and minor alterations of the structure at 1124 Valley Road (Map 46, Block 105, Lot 78) in the Four Acre Zone.

Dated: December 4, 2025  
New Canaan, Connecticut  
Daniel Radman, Chairman

LEGAL AD

TOWN OF NEW CANAAN  
INLAND WETLANDS  
COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given that the Inland Wetlands Agent has approved the following application:

Permit Number (IW-25-50) issued to Echo Hill, LLC, 1 Echo Hill Road, Map 48 Block 109 Lot V15. Prepare site for construction activities and install soil and erosion controls. Perform tree removal as noted on plans. Regrade a 50x100'± area as noted on the plan. Remove 2285± SF of existing service driveway from the upland review area and replant with trees and lawn. Plant 12 Green Giant Arborvitae and 10 Norway Spruce in the upland review area. Install a new driveway with a pervious gravel base. Fine grade, seed and stabilize all disturbed areas upon completion.



## PURA & HB8002

Connecticut’s habit of legislating first and thinking later has again revealed its cost. Within days of the General Assembly’s passage of House Bill 8002 – a sweeping assertion of bureaucratic housing supervision over 169 municipalities – the state’s utilities regulator issued a decision that exposes a broader pattern: Hartford creates problems faster than towns can clean them up. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority’s unanimous rejection of the proposed sale of Aquarion Water Company was a rebuke not only to the transaction but to the improvised legislative maneuvering that enabled it.

*“The essence of government is power; and power, lodged as it must be in human hands, will ever be liable to abuse.” – James Madison*

PURA found that the legislative structure forced upon towns produced a governance scheme riddled with incompatible fiduciary duties, an erosion of local representation, an underpowered consumer-advocacy system, and financial designs that would have burdened ratepayers with years of steady increases. In the record, town officials, including those from New Canaan, Ridgefield, Fairfield and Westport, demonstrated how the law that created the Aquarion Water Authority was crafted in haste, folded into an omnibus bill, and sent through a special session without public scrutiny. The result was a structure abundant in lofty rhetoric and deficient in workable oversight.

The pattern matters. For years, Hartford has deployed its supermajority not to refine governance but to accelerate it, rushing through complex mandates whose defects are left to municipalities to litigate, reinterpret, or simply endure. PURA’s decision details how the enabling legislation created a representative board in which more than half the affected municipalities would have held no effective votes at all, replaced the independent Office of Consumer Counsel with an entity lacking staff and independence, and installed an interlocking board of directors unable to resolve conflicting loyalties. PURA concluded that these flaws were so elemental that they rendered the entire structure unfit for public stewardship.

Towns know this pattern well. When the legislature enacts sweeping directives – whether in utilities, zoning, education mandates or municipal reporting – the state announces ambition while municipalities absorb the consequences. Millions of dollars and thousands of work hours are diverted from local needs to unwinding the state’s missteps. Towns hire counsel, commission studies, file testimony, and attend hearings simply to correct errors produced by legislating without deliberation.

House Bill 8002 follows the same script. It requires every municipality to produce state-compliant housing growth plans or join regional ones. It binds zoning commissions to a series of incentives and penalties, dictates parking and density rules, and conditions relief from developer appeals on adherence to Hartford’s framework. Its aspirations are tidy; its mechanisms are indifferent to local knowledge. The bill was advanced as if uniformity were a virtue rather than an imposition, and as if a central authority were better positioned to adjudicate the differences between towns than the residents who live in them.

The PURA proceeding demonstrated the cost of such presumptions. Towns emphasized that Aquarion is among their largest taxpayers, and that the proposed PILOT structure would cause declining municipal revenue over time. They noted that RWA’s rates exceed Aquarion’s by wide margins and that the acquisition premium and debt structure would have produced steady rate increases. PURA agreed, finding the transaction contrary to the public interest and inconsistent with the statutory requirement to promote local control.

The lesson is that governance by supermajority can drift into governance by velocity: bills drafted quickly, passed quickly, and corrected slowly at great public expense. When the legislature treats towns as administrative branches rather than equal participants in the state’s civic order, it sets in motion the very conflicts PURA was forced to resolve.

New England’s strength has never been centralization. It has been the steadiness of local judgment exercised at human scale. The state should resist its impulse to manufacture solutions from above and then leave towns to repair the debris. Authority is not wisdom, and speed is not competence. The public interest is best served not by legislative improvisation but by restraint, clarity, and respect for local government.

# Editorial Page



"And the teddy bear needs a separate wakeup call?"

## COLUMN

### The Sunny Side of Life



By ADAM C. ROHDIE

Our Upper School History Teacher Jim Cullen wrote the following piece on his Substack just before Thanksgiving and I was struck by his sincere admiration of a co-worker, and her ability to see the sunny side of life—every day. He also wonders at the motivation behind her work, is it to earn a living or simply to spread happiness or both? No matter the reason, no matter the work, as educators, parents, and guardians of our youth, I hope we instill in them a sense of passion and positivity as they prepare to pursue their life’s purpose.

#### Thankful for the Thankful

*As someone who lacks a sunny disposition, I’ve learned to appreciate those who have one. To a great extent, I regard this as a God-given gift—the result of a genetic endowment that is only one of life’s many mysteries. However, I also recognize that,*

*like many gifted individuals, this attribute is one whose value grows and deepens with time and disciplined application.*

*The people who, in my childhood, were known by the now antiquated term “lunch ladies”—individuals who prepare and serve food to children—are linchpin figures, and usually end up in such a role because it requires a good dollop of social skills. I happen to work in a well-endowed institution where the dining services operation, like so many others at the school, is first-rate. However, even in that context, my colleague Antoinette stands out in a category of her own. For Antoinette, every single day is, to quote her, “a beautiful day!” and if it happens to be raining cats and dogs, there will be a twinkle in her eye as she says so. Any given morning will provide an opportunity to help her garden, prompt her to cook something to reflect the weather, or to soak up the sunshine. Antoinette is on the job at dawn, and I will sometimes find her manning a catering table thirteen hours later at a school function with the same bright expression, even as fatigue asserts its claim*

*Gratitude is a complicated emotion. It can’t be willed into existence, and is a gift in its own right when we find it conferred upon us, accompanied as it sometimes is with earned humility.*

*on her. She makes an omelette with the same brio she replaces a tray of home fries, and banters with the kitchen staff all day long. (Her nickname for me: “young man.”) You find yourself smiling despite yourself.*

*Antoinette is married to our assistant director of technology—a similarly sunny Colombian native with whom she has a daughter who graduated from the school—and at one point owned a beloved local delicatessen [Rinaldi’s] that she sold. So it’s not clear to me that she actually needs this job. For the money, anyway. I hope any students reading these words will understand that good work is so much more than a degree, a title, or a salary.*

*Gratitude is a complicated*

*emotion. It can’t be willed into existence, and is a gift in its own right when we find it conferred upon us, accompanied as it sometimes is with earned humility. Like the elusive and yet irresistible grace of God, as the Pilgrims who celebrated that first Thanksgiving in the fall of 1621 understood it. I’m glad they came. And that Antoinette followed.*

*- By Jim Cullen, GCDS, Upper School History Teacher*

This holiday season, I hope you all find a little space to see life’s sunny side. Let’s show our children that there’s joy to be found—and shared—every single day.

*Adam C. Rohdie is the GCDS Head of School*

## LETTER

### Join Us in Supporting the New Canaan Community Foundation

Dear Fellow New Canaan Community Residents,

As we enter this beautiful holiday season, we are reminded of how fortunate we are to live in this vibrant and active community we call home. New Canaan is centered around creating a safe and welcoming environment for its residents and neighbors, providing access to health, education, arts and a vast array of social services. The New Canaan Community Foundation (“NCCF”) sits at the center of many of these programs. It has established itself as a pillar in the community, providing guidance and funding to help not-for-profit organizations fulfill their missions and meet their funding needs.

The three of us are proud to be tri-chairing the 2025 NCCF Annual Appeal. We each came to New Canaan at differing points in our lives, but we are unified in our love of this town and the fabric of the community that surrounds us. We have seen our families and our neighbors benefit

from the deep resources available to them, and where residents are quick to jump in and help support their favorite causes. We love the can-do attitude of this town. We love seeing the crowds that line the streets for the Memorial Day parade, the support of Mental Health Awareness, the NCCF spring luncheon, the Rotary Club Lobsterfest, the Mayfair, the NCM&HS Ice Cream Social, the opening of the Library, the Waveny Care gala, the GetAbout spring party, the YMCA Family Days...the list goes on and on!

As we reflect on our special community, we ask our fellow New Canaan residents to think about the critical role that NCCF plays in assisting so many of these organizations – both here in town and in the neighboring communities. In its 2025 main grant cycle, NCCF awarded \$1.04 million to 94 nonprofits serving New Canaan and our neighbors, Stamford and Norwalk, to help them meet critical funding needs. Importantly, NCCF also provides guidance to these organizations through its grant

review process; offers opportunities to network, collaborate, and work towards shared goals; and invests in their long-term capacity through workshops and technical assistance.

While we certainly encourage each of you to continue giving directly to your favorite local charities, we also ask you to consider supporting the community at the NCCF level via donating to our 2025 Annual Appeal. We have each committed to raising our giving levels this year, especially in light of the funding cuts for many programs at the national and state levels, and we ask you to consider doing the same. NCCF needs your support!

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

*Best regards,*

*Carolyn Silverman Crisafulli  
Peter Herbert  
Kathy Auda Skaperdas*

### Police Chief to update Men’s Club on department’s activities

New Canaan Police Chief John DiFederico, who has 33 years with the department, having started as a patrol officer in 1992, will be the New Canaan Men’s Club speaker Friday, Dec. 5.

In his remarks, the chief is likely to describe the current workings of the department, how it has adjusted to its renovated South Avenue headquarters, steps residents can take to protect their property and any trends he sees as chief. He may also discuss the new cameras being added to downtown in order to document and respond to events such as a recent traffic accident that blocked traffic.

The Men’s club meets in Morrill Hall at St. Mark’s Episcopal

Church, 111 Oenoke Ridge at 10 a.m. The chief is expected to begin his remarks around 10:40 a.m., after the business portion of the meeting.

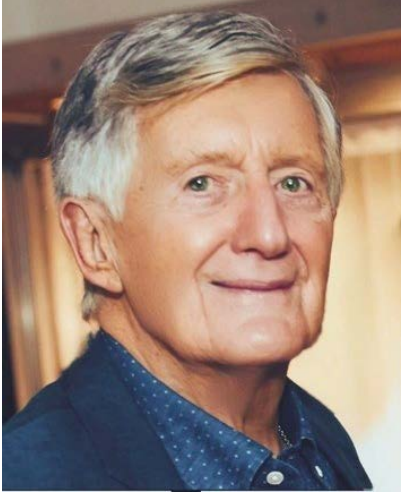
DiFederico was named chief in January 2023, after serving nearly five years as deputy chief. He has a B.A. in Criminal Justice from Norwich University in Vermont. He received his masters in Public Administration from the University of New Haven in 2023.

With the upcoming holidays and the annual holiday luncheon, the club’s next regular meeting will be on Jan. 9. The club has openings for new members, men 55-years old and above. For information about joining, email ncmens@ncmens.org.



# Obituaries

## Robert Kamerschen



Robert J. “Kam” Kamerschen, a retired executive whose led several Fortune 500 companies, died on November 15, after a brave battle with Alzheimer’s disease. He was 89 and was a resident of New Canaan, CT, and Orleans, MA, for many years.

Kam was the Chairman and CEO of Advo, Inc., the nation’s largest direct mail services company, for 10 years. Prior to that, he served as Chairman, CEO or COO of RKO/ Six Flags, Marketing Corporation of America, and Chanel and Christian Dior Perfums. He was Group President at Norton Simon, Inc., where his responsibilities included Hunt Wesson Foods, Max Factor, Halston Enterprises, and United Can. Earlier in his career, he held senior marketing executive assignments at Scott Paper Company, Dunkin’ Donuts and Revlon. Following retirement, Kam was an active private investor, and senior advisor to multiple companies and people. Kam took pleasure in being a mentor; you knew he was a fan if you received articles noted with inspirational quotes; “Onward and Upward!” and “The Best Never Rest” were favorites.

Born in Larium, Michigan, on February 16, 1935, Kam was raised in Chicago by his parents, Robert and Elsie. He received his B.S. and MBA with honors from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Kam married the former Judith Campbell in 1958; they recently celebrated their 67th anniversary. An avid athlete, Kam played football, baseball and wrestled in school, and maintained a rigorous exercise routine. He took great pride in his fitness, striving to be the “Jack Lalane” of his generation throughout most of his eighties.

A parishioner at St. Aloysius in New Canaan, Kam also supported the arts and education. He served as a trustee at Emerson College, Columbia College and Hartford University. An active alumnus of Miami University, he endowed a scholarship there for Women in Business. He was also a trustee at the Wadsworth Antheneum Museum of Art and the Bushnell Theater, both in Hartford, CT.

He is survived by Judith, and his 3 daughters: Kathryn, Carol and Jean. He was known affectionately as “King” by his 5 grandchildren: Campbell, Jake, Charlie, Julia and Lucette. Kam is also survived by his brother, Dr. David Kamerschen. He was predeceased by his parents, and sister, Robyn Kriz.

A celebration of Kam’s life is planned for Spring, 2026. In lieu of flowers, please consider memorial donations to the Alzheimer’s Association or the American Cancer Society.

## Gerald O’Connell



Gerald (Gerry) Francis O’Connell of New Canaan, CT, Nantucket, MA and Sanibel, FL, died November 27, 2025, surrounded by his incredible wife of 61 years, Judith Ann (Papp) O’Connell, and his loving family.

Gerry was born on October 17, 1938, the second son of Desmond Henry Sr. and Rosemary

McGough O’Connell in Plainfield, NJ. The brother of predeceased Desmond H. O’Connell, his wife, Roberta O’Connell, and Timothy E. O’Connell, his husband, Larry Little. Father to Kevin M. O’Connell, his wife Dianna, Julia (O’Connell) Bossidy, her husband, Michael, Patrick M. O’Connell, his wife, Robin, Megan (O’Connell) Marciano, her husband, Lance, Colleen (O’Connell) Bailey, her husband, Troy, and Erin (O’Connell) Hoffman, her husband, Mitch. He is survived by his 21 grandchildren, Michael, his wife, Emma, Edward, his wife, Annie, Madeleine, her fiancé, Justin, Josephine, Ryan, Quinitin, Courtney, Katherine, Emery, Shea, Brinley, Isabella, Christina, Nicholas, Teresa, Conor, Reagan, Brendan, Maddox, Brody and Cole, as well as two great-grandsons, James and Graham. Gerry was loved profoundly by his family and left nearly everyone he encountered with gratitude for their time with him.

Gerry spent his early years in Fanwood and Westfield, NJ. He then lived in Winnetka, Illinois and attended New Trier High School, where he was a proud member of what he claimed to be “the best high school football team ever.” Gerry graduated from John Carroll University in Ohio in 1961 with a BS in Economics. He then earned his master’s in business from Loyola University in Chicago, where he met his future wife, Judy, in the summer of 1959.

Gerry joined the Army and served from 1961-1963, with the final rank of 1st Lieutenant. Gerry and Judy were married on November 14, 1964, in Chicago, and lived in Riverside, IL, and Ann Arbor, MI, before finally settling in 1980 to their beloved community of New Canaan, CT.

Gerry’s successful career in technology had him involved with 12 different companies over the years, where he was supported by venture capital firms and his own investments. As Gerry stated in an interview years ago, “My resumé looks like a schedule for a commuter train that stops at all stations.” Gerry was a very active member in a variety of charities and community organizations: New Canaan Sports Council, Chairman of the New Canaan Board of Education, New Canaan Men’s Club, and coached multiple New Canaan youth football and softball teams. Gerry particularly cherished being part of the St. Aloysius community and working on Emmaus retreats over the years. He was active with the Fresh Air Fund and, along with Judy, volunteered at the New Covenant House, where they served meals at the soup kitchen for 40 years. Gerry and Judy were active as alumni and donors at the Jesuit Universities: John Carroll University and Loyola of Chicago.

Gerry was a spirited golfer, where he valued camaraderie more than some of his score cards. He favored golf rounds on Nantucket, as well as sitting under an umbrella at the beach with family, and his Annual Lobster Bake on island. He was a huge sports fan, especially Michigan football, but his favorite events to watch were those in which his children and grandchildren were the participants. He was so proud to cheer on his family in sports, music, and theater.

Gerry was a courageous Catholic. His faith was the bedrock on which he built his life. He modeled this strength by consistently choosing the harder right instead of the easier wrong. He was generous with his time and practiced the Jesuit mission of serving with and for others. He shared these beliefs with his beautiful wife, Judy. Gerry loved his wife beyond measure, regarding her with endearing admiration as his unwavering companion. He adamantly would state that marrying Judy was the greatest decision he ever made, and he was grateful for every day they shared.

A Wake was held December 3 at Hoyt Funeral Home, New Canaan, CT, followed by a funeral Mass at

St. Aloysius Catholic Church, New Canaan, CT, on December 4. A reception was held after services at Roger Sherman Inn, New Canaan.

## John Daly



John Neal Daly passed away on November 24, 2025 at Greenwich Hospital in Greenwich, CT.

Born in Washington D.C. on November 14, 1937, his father was the famed newsman and broadcaster, John Charles Daly. Along with his mother, Margaret Criswell Neal and his siblings, they resided in a home on the grounds of the Westchester Country Club. While enjoying his youth, John chose to attend the Phillips Andover Academy from 1952 to 1955. From there, He went on to attend Yale University. Upon his graduation in 1959, he spent two years in the Marine Corps.

After his stint, John entered the world of business, joining the firm of E.F. Hutton & Co. with whom he spent 23 years, at various times, he ran the Syndicate Department, the Commodities Division and the Asset Management Division. As well, during his time with E.F. Hutton, he completed the prestigious Harvard University Advanced Management Program in 1979. From Hutton, John joined Salomon Brothers, both at the New York and London offices, where he headed for the Private Client Division and International Equity Capital Markets. He then went on to become the Director of Separately Managed Accounts at Spears, Benzak, Salomon & Farrell, spending 10 years with the firm. He went on to fill a similar role with Prudential Managed Accounts from 2002 to 2005. Lastly, he founded IMMS Inc., a separately managed accounts consulting firm. Also notable is John’s work with CareCloud, a leading healthcare technology company where he had been a Director since 2014.

Throughout the course of his career, John enjoyed accolades and roles within the investment community. He was a long-time member of the Bond Club of New York, serving as the president for a term. He was also a proud member of Kappa Beta Phi, a social organization of investment luminaries, serving as the Grand Swipe in 1977. As well, John served as a Director of the Greenwich Historical Society. A longtime member of the Yale Club, John also enjoyed membership in other New York City institutions. An honorary member of the Burning Tree Club in Washington D.C., John was an active member of The Round Hill Club in Greenwich.

Through his education and business relationships, John had an enormous circle of friends and associates which were very important in his life. They were so numerous that a running family joke was that he could find someone he knew even in deepest Africa, which actually came to fruition while on safari in Kenya in 1986.

Traveling with his family was one of John’s great joys. From getaways with his wife Barbara, trips with his children and many times having his three half-siblings from his father’s second marriage made for great fun, many laughs and tremendous memories. John and Barbara first went to Harbour Island in the Bahamas in 1967 and enjoyed annual visits there, owning a home for 22 years.

Speaking of his wife, Barbara and John enjoyed the best kind of union, two people with different strengths and abilities, but who complemented each other so perfectly. It sounds like cliché,

but they truly were each other’s best friend and that was readily apparent to anyone who knew or spent time with them. Meeting in New York City through mutual friends, they hit it off instantly and married in April 1966, enjoying 4 and a half years of marriage before welcoming the first child, John. Parenthood brought them out to the country, moving to New Canaan, CT before welcoming their daughter Cristina. They moved to Greenwich in 1977, where they have resided ever since.

Aside from family, friends and business, John had numerous other interests, among them was his participation with The Culinary Institute of America, the preeminent cooking school in the country and arguably the world. Asked to join to assist in the management of the school’s assets, his role expanded over time. He began as a “member” of the corporation and joined the Board of Trustees, serving as Treasurer and Chair of Finance. Since 2004, he had served as a Trustee Emeritus. In his time, John was crucial in developing the CIA’s Napa Valley Campus and participated in the building of international campuses.

John is survived by his wife Barbara and children John and Cristina. As well he is survived by his beloved grandchildren, Caroline and Jack Hamel and his brother Charles and half siblings James and Nina.

Per the family’s request, in lieu of flowers, please make a donation to a scholarship in John’s name with The Culinary Institute of America. The link to donate is here: [www.ciachef.edu/JohnNDalyScholarship](http://www.ciachef.edu/JohnNDalyScholarship)

## Nancy Shaw



Nancy Ramsey Shaw, lifelong lover of the arts, devoted wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away on November 24, 2025, at the age of 90.

Born in Atlanta, GA to Martha and Alan Ramsey; Nancy grew up in Druid Hills. As a child she discovered a passion for ballet that shaped her early life. She danced with the Atlanta Ballet while attending Druid Hills High School.

Nancy attended Brenau College for a year before marrying Scott A. Shaw, in 1954. During Scott’s service as a U.S. Navy aviator, the couple lived on several naval bases, beginning a lifetime filled with adventure. They later settled in Chappaqua, NY, where they were members of the community for 45 years and longtime parishioners of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin. Nancy served faithfully on the Altar Guild for many years.

Determined to continue her education, Nancy completed her bachelor’s degree in English at Pace University Westchester. She worked as an editor for The Patent Trader, then as a paralegal, and later taught English at Berlitz, where her warmth and patience endeared her to many international executives whom she taught.

Nancy and Scott spent four cherished years living in Paris during an IBM expatriate assignment. They traveled extensively throughout France. While in Paris, Nancy honed her considerable culinary talents by attending advanced cooking classes-skills she carried into a lifetime of gracious entertaining.

Their love of travel carried them across Canada, Europe, Japan, Singapore, Indonesia, and all 50 U.S. states. Nancy embraced each destination with curiosity and delight. She loved the arts deeply-attending ballets at Lincoln

Center, concerts at Carnegie Hall, exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Broadway plays, and Saturday matinees at the local cinema. Summers were spent at Tanglewood, where Nancy and Scott reveled in performances by the Boston Symphony, Boston Pops, and many other artists.

At home, Nancy was a gentle, nurturing mother and grandmother who shared her passion for cooking with the next generations. Annually she baked Christmas cookies with her grandkids and she curated seasonal menus for family gatherings. A lifelong animal lover, she cared for many cats and dogs, finding great comfort and joy in their companionship. She was also an avid gardener.

Nancy was predeceased by her beloved husband of 67 years, Scott Shaw, and their son, Kelly Shaw. She will be remembered as kindhearted and friendly with piercing blue eyes and a beautiful smile.

She is survived by her daughter Allyson Shaw Kates and son-in-law Ken, her five grandchildren and their spouses, and two great-grandsons, Meredith Karin (John), Theodore Karin, Kristina Anderson (Burke), Charles Anderson, Andrew Kates, Eleanor Shaw (Ryan Dougherty), and Alexandra Shaw (Austin Dabney).

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the staff at Waveny LifeCare Network in New Canaan, CT for their compassion, empathy, and kindness to Nancy.

## William Jepsen



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of William “Bill” P. Jepsen on November 21, 2025. Born on December 12, 1940, in Boston, Massachusetts, Bill was the son of the late Carlton and Marjorey (Hayes) Jepsen. He grew up in Milton, MA, attended Boston College High School, and continued his Jesuit education at The College of the Holy Cross, graduating in 1962. He later earned his MBA from Columbia Business School in 1964.

It was during his time at Columbia, in the Crown Room at John Jay Hall, that Bill met the love of his life, Mary (Ripple). The two were married for 55 wonderful years, raising their family in New Canaan, CT, before retiring to Madison and North Branford, CT. Their partnership was the heart of Bill’s life-built on shared values, deep affection, and a lifetime of stories.

Bill enjoyed a long and successful career in marketing, beginning at the Maxwell House Division of General Foods and later moving to Schaeffer Beer Company, where he and his friends happily enjoyed the perks that came with the job-ensuring that their Fire Island summers with friends were always well supplied. He went on to serve at American Can Corporation and concluded his career in the paper division of Georgia-Pacific, retiring in 2004. During his time in the paper industry, Bill took special pride in helping support American troops abroad, including arranging donations of essential paper products and supplies for those serving in Iraq.

A loving and devoted father, Bill is survived by his children: Michael Jepsen (Bita Shoku) of Los Angeles, CA; Christine Readlinger (Robert) of Chatham, NJ; Brian Jepsen (Erin) of New Canaan, CT; Paul Jepsen (Michelle) of Oakland, CA; and Kathryn Salerno (Michael) of San Pedro, CA. He was the proud grandfather of Jack, Emma, Ryan, a n d

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**



# Slow Down, It's Advent



By MAREK ZABRISKIE

A few years ago, I bought a new cell phone and managed to lose it within 24 hours while walking our dogs on a golf course. It fell on the grass somewhere between the first and 18th hole with thousands of yards in between.

I searched and searched. I even prayed to St. Anthony and St. Jude, the patron saints of lost objects and lost causes, but both saints were too busy assisting people seeking lost car keys.

I was busy and stressed. We had just visited family and now had family was visiting us. I had lots of deadlines to meet at work, and then I snapped at family members and lost my cool. I realized that I needed the message of Advent.

Advent is the first season of the Church Year. It's the season that precedes and prepares us for Christmas. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means coming. Advent is a season where the Church invites us to slow down, to wait and to watch for God's Spirit in the midst of our

frantic living. It's a message that many of us who are busy need to hear.

The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas can be the most stressful time of the year. We are busy planning for the holidays, hosting family, traveling, shopping, cooking, buying gifts and decorating the house. This season comes full of expectations for joy and happiness, but sometimes what we get are heartaches instead.

In her book *The Overworked American* Juliet Schor notes that the average working American now has only 16 hours a week when they are not at work, tending household chores or children or sleeping. That's not a lot of time to let God speak to us.

Nevertheless, the average American spends 10 hours before a computer screen and 18 hours watching television each week. We fiddle with little gadgets, cell phones and video games, texting, emailing and social media.

If we are not careful technology can destroy our spirituality. In Advent the Church invites us to slow down and hear God speak our name, heal our soul, and recharge our battery.

Preacher Barbara Brown Taylor says, "With the wisdom of centuries, the Church encourages us to pause outside of Bethlehem

and lie down upon a hillside a little distant from our destination and gaze upon the stars." That's the purpose of Advent. To find ways to pause and wonder.

We were built for contemplation. St. Augustine described God as the *unum necessarium* – "the one thing necessary." God is the very ground of our being. "Beauty ever ancient, ever new," says Augustine. "You were within and I was outside myself."

God is often illusive, because we are too frazzled and busy. We are like wistful agnostics, vaguely aware of something beyond us that is at the heart of all things – namely God.

We have a lot of noise like a cocktail party going on within our head distracting us from God. Thus, St. John of the Cross says, "The Father spoke one Word, which was his Son, and this Word he speaks always in eternal silence, and in silence must be heard by the soul."

We have to slow down and be quiet in order to hear God speak. We need not be scared of silence for it is something that the spirit needs to flourish in a world where noises invade our lives at every point.

The Irish poet Padraig Daly writes in his poem "Thomas Merton," "What is to be said about silence, Except that it is; And you

*We have to slow down and be quiet in order to hear God speak. We need not be scared of silence for it is something that the spirit needs to flourish in a world where noises invade our lives at every point.*

sought it out diligently in your woods, Living alone with your books, In the company of birds..."

The fourteenth century German mystic Meister Eckhart claimed that "nothing in all creation is so like God as stillness." To be human with God is to be shaped by the space at the center of our lives, that still point of nothingness at the center of our being that belongs entirely to God.

A challenge is that most of us do not like to wait. We're impatient. We'd rather do something productive. Most of our lives are about doing when they should also be about being and becoming.

We like earning, working, playing, reading, driving, selling, baking, decorating, whereas waiting is essentially a matter of being – listening, looking, wondering, pausing, pondering and praying. Something godly happens to us when we balance our doing with more being.

In Advent John the Baptist comes to prepare the way of the Lord, like a landing strip for God

to land. John urges us to "repent," which is a word that makes us cringe.

Repent, however, means "to turn around" or "change direction." A little change of direction can do a world of good if we are headed in the wrong direction. But we are often afraid – even to make small changes.

We often settle for the status quo because it's familiar – even if deep down we know that it makes us unhappy. John the Baptist urges us to change, because change opens us to the possibility of a better future.

For some of us that might mean reducing the unhealthy expectations that we place on our shoulders during this season and making Advent more manageable.

John the Baptist urges us to take little steps. Most of what constitutes a great relationship in life are not monumental actions but little acts of love over a long period of time. John the Baptist says, "Bear fruit worthy of change." God knows that little acts of love lead to good

relationships and deep joy.

So we run errands for our spouse or stop by Starbucks and buy a latte for a friend. We write a note to a family member or assist a neighbor who has just had a baby or lost a parent.

After losing my cell phone I carefully walked the golf course twice – once even at night with a flash light. I drove around on a golf cart searching as well. Then 24 hours after losing it, I found it lying on the grass.

Maybe St. Anthony and St. Jude were listening to my prayers after all. But God had reminded me in the interval that what matters most in life is not a recovered object, but the relationships that make our lives rich and meaningful.

As we move through Advent, John the Baptist reminds us to slow down, watch and wait for God to come again. Prepare the way for God, and Jesus indeed will come.

*The Rev. Marek Zabriskie loves people, pilgrimage, poetry, studying languages, and learning about history and different cultures.*

## Worship Directory and Services

UPDATE SERVICES AND ADD SPECIAL EVENTS TO THIS CALENDAR AT  
[www.NewCanaanSentinel.com/worship-calendar-updates](http://www.NewCanaanSentinel.com/worship-calendar-updates)

### Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

682 South Avenue 203.966.5849  
[www.ComeUntoChrist.org](http://www.ComeUntoChrist.org)  
Sunday Service: 9:00 AM

### Congregational Church

23 Park Street 203.966.2651  
[office@godsacre.org](mailto:office@godsacre.org)  
[www.godsacre.org](http://www.godsacre.org)

**Sunday Services: 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM.** The 10:00 am service is also live streamed and recorded, the video replay will be available throughout the week. Church School is available on Sundays for children ages 3 through 7th grade each Sunday from September through mid-June.

#### **Recurring Events:**

**Tuesdays at 9:30 AM:** Women's Bible Study

**Wednesdays at 9:30 AM:** Bible Study

**Fourth Thursday from 12-2:30 PM:** Meet at the Open Door Shelter in Norwalk to serve a meal.

#### **Upcoming Events:**

**December 24 at 4 PM: Family Worship Service, 6 PM: Worship Service, 6:30 PM: Caroling on God's Acre, 7 PM: Worship Service, 11 PM: Candlelight Worship Service**

### First Church of Christ, Scientist

49 Park Street 203.966.0293  
[christiansciencet.org/newcanaan](http://christiansciencet.org/newcanaan)

**Sunday 10:30 AM,** in person only. Sunday School is available during Sunday Service and is open to children and young people up to the age of 20. There is also childcare available for children too young for Sunday School.

**Wednesday Testimony Meeting:** 1st Wednesday of each month, join by zoom or by phone 646 558 8656. Reading Room Hours: Open Mondays 11-2, Call to confirm hours 203-966-0293. All are welcome to the Sunday and Wednesday services, Sunday School, and the reading room.

### First Presbyterian Church

178 Oenoke Ridge Road 203.966.0002  
[fpcnc.org](http://fpcnc.org)

**Sunday Service: 10am** in person or via LocalLive. All are welcome. Coffee Hour after the service is also available in person or via Zoom. Dedicated childcare is available for all children via Wee Care Nanny Agency from 8:45-11:30am in the Nursery School. Transcripts of previous sermons are also available via the First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan's website. Recurring Events: Every Saturday 9:15am (closed) and 10:30am (open): Alcoholics Anonymous. Every Tuesday 8pm: Men's A.A.

**Third Wednesday from 6-7:30 PM:** Wednesdays at the Well are intergenerational opportunities to learn and grow in faith together. Dinner will be served and all ages are invited.

#### **Upcoming Events:**

**December 11 at 3 PM & December 12 at 7 PM: A New Canaan Chamber Music concert with Andrew Armstrong and James Ehnes. Tickets available at <https://newcanaanchambermusic.org/tickets/>.**

**December 16 from 7-9 PM: Open Mic Night** featuring Luke Molina. You are invited to an evening to share music and/or poetry. To sign up, email [nickdepuy@gmail.com](mailto:nickdepuy@gmail.com).

**December 24 at 5 PM:** Christmas Eve Family Service. 10 PM: Join for a candlelight service with Communion.

### Saint Aloysius Roman Catholic Church

21 Cherry Street 203.966.0020  
[www.starcc.com](http://www.starcc.com)  
**Service Schedule:**

**Saturday: Vigil for Sunday 5:00 p.m.**

**Sunday: 7:00 a.m., 8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.** The Sunday 8:30 a.m. mass is live-streamed and recorded.  
**Monday-Friday: 7:00 am and 5:30 pm**  
**Saturday: 7:00 am**

#### **Recurring Events:**

**Last Monday of every month 7pm:** Women's Praise & Worship Holy Hour

**Fridays 7:30am-6pm:** Eucharistic Adoration (September-June)  
**Saturday 8:30am:** St. A's Healing Rosary Prayer Group

#### **Upcoming Events:**

**December 5 at 6, 6:30, & 7 PM: The Living Nativity.** Location: In Front of the Church on Cherry Street  
Come see live animals – Suitable for the entire family.

**December 14th at 2 PM: The 22nd Annual Advent, Christmas Concert.** Tickets available on the St. Aloysius

#### **website.**

### St. Mark's Episcopal Church

111 Oenoke Ridge 203.966.4515  
[churchoffice@stmarksnewcanaan.org](mailto:churchoffice@stmarksnewcanaan.org)  
[www.stmarksnewcanaan.org](http://www.stmarksnewcanaan.org)

**Sunday Services: 8:00am:** Indoor Holy Eucharist Rite I; **9:00am:** Outdoor Holy Eucharist Rite II; **10am:** Indoor Holy Eucharist Rite II (Live Stream also available on the St. Mark's website). Coffee Hour follows the 10am service. Church School during the 10am service: Godly Play for children in kindergarten through second grade; Holy Moly for third and fourth grades; Meet in the Middle for fifth, sixth and seventh grades. Professional childcare is offered for children ages four and under. Families with children who are not yet ready to separate for childcare are invited to use the rocking chairs at the rear of the chapel.

**Weekday Services: Monday-Friday, 8:30am:** Morning Prayer/Rite II by Zoom.

**Wednesday at 12:05pm:** Noonday Eucharist in the chapel.

#### **Recurring Events:**

**First Wednesday at 1pm:** Laundry Love volunteering opportunity to come alongside people who are struggling financially by assisting them with their laundry.

**First & Third Wednesdays from 6-7:30pm:** Youth Group

#### **Upcoming Events:**

**December 14 at 5 PM: A Service of Nine Lessons & Carols.** Carols and hymns are sung by the Choir and by all. Followed by a festive reception. No ticket or registration required.

**December 24 at 5 PM: The World's Greatest Christmas Pageant.**

### St. Michael's Lutheran Church

5 Oenoke Ridge 203.966.3913  
[office@stmichaelslutheran.org](mailto:office@stmichaelslutheran.org)  
[www.stmichaelslutheran.org](http://www.stmichaelslutheran.org)

**Sunday Service at 10:00 am.** Following the service there is coffee, cookies and conversation in the Fellowship Hall.

#### **Recurring Events:**

**Thursday 12 PM:** Alcoholics Anonymous

#### **Upcoming Events:**

**December 24 at 5 PM:** Christmas Eve Worship.

### Trinity Church

#### New Canaan | Darien

1800 E. Putnam Ave, Old Greenwich  
203.618.0808  
[info@trinitychurch.life](mailto:info@trinitychurch.life)  
[www.trinitychurch.life](http://www.trinitychurch.life)

Join us **Sundays at 10 a.m.** at Greenwich Hyatt Regency for lively worship, thoughtful and applicable teaching, weekly Communion, and an opportunity to make friends and grow in community. Trinity Kids (infants through fifth grade) and Trinity Youth (middle and high schoolers) take place during the service, and coffee and refreshments are served following worship. The service is also available on livestream via Youtube, Sundays at 10:00 a.m.; learn more at [www.trinitychurch.life](http://www.trinitychurch.life).

### United Methodist Church

165 South Avenue 203.966.2666  
[frontdesk@umcofnewcanaan.org](mailto:frontdesk@umcofnewcanaan.org)  
[www.umcofnewcanaan.org](http://www.umcofnewcanaan.org)  
Join us for Sunday Worship!  
Sunday Service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Come for uplifting music and a relevant, inspiring message – and stay after for coffee and conversation during Fellowship Time.

Sunday School for ages 3 through high school resumes September 7. Child care is available for children from infancy through age 5.

#### **Recurring Events:**

**Mens Breakfast at 8:45 AM:** The United Methodist Church invites all men to our Men's Breakfast, held on the first Sunday of every month. Enjoy fellowship, good food, and meaningful conversation as we share time together in faith and friendship.

### Community Baptist Church

174 Cherry Street 203.966.0711  
[cbcnewcanaan@gmail.com](mailto:cbcnewcanaan@gmail.com)  
[www.cbcnewcanaan.org](http://www.cbcnewcanaan.org)

Youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoZ2UNa8aH13O\\_Syp\\_X0KDg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoZ2UNa8aH13O_Syp_X0KDg)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CBCNewCanaan/>  
Sunday School at 10:00am  
Worship Service at 11:00am

Live Facebook Broadcast 11:30 am

### Grace Community Church

**9:30am Service @ New Canaan High School, 11 Farm Road, New Canaan**  
**203-966-7600**

[info@gracecommunity.info](mailto:info@gracecommunity.info)  
[www.gracecommunity.info](http://www.gracecommunity.info)

Welcome to Grace Church, where we strive to build a church of action, founded on Biblical truth, characterized by faith, grace, community, service, authenticity, clear thinking, and cultural relevance. Grace Community Church is an exercise in knowing God, knowing truth, and building community that extends to our full lives, not just to our Sunday mornings.

Join us **Sunday mornings at 9:30am** or via GCC's Facebook page or YouTube page. Nursery care and Sunday school/teen programming is available for babies through 12th grade. Coffee and bagels available in the lobby after the service, all are welcome.

### Talmadge Hill Community Church

870 Hollow Tree Ridge Road; Darien, CT  
203.966.2314  
[talmadgehillchurch@gmail.com](mailto:talmadgehillchurch@gmail.com)  
[www.talmadgehill.org](http://www.talmadgehill.org)

Ministers: Rev. Carter Via and Rev. Cheryl Bundy **Sunday worship service at 10:00am** in person. All are welcome! We encourage everyone to stay for coffee hour after the service. Sunday School is every Sunday during the service and uses the Godly Play curriculum. Please reach out with any questions utilizing information listed above!

#### **Recurring Events:**

**Thursdays at 9:30am:** Bible Study

**First Saturday at 8am:** Men's Group

**Second Saturday at 10am:** Women's Circle

#### **Upcoming Events:**

**December 13 at 5 PM:** Christmas Candlelight Concert. Email Talmadge Hill for more information.

### Chabad New Canaan Jewish Center

137 Putnam Rd

[info@chabadnewcanaan.org](mailto:info@chabadnewcanaan.org)  
[www.newcanaanjewish.org](http://www.newcanaanjewish.org)

The Chabad New Canaan Jewish Center is dedicated to strengthening and building the New Canaan Jewish Community by offering local Jewish resources that bring more positivity, Jewish education, charitable activity, good deeds and blessing to our lovely town.

We are about Judaism, not affiliation. Regardless of your background, and however you choose to define your level of Jewish observance or identity, the Chabad New Canaan Jewish Center can add spirituality, joy, study, community and connection for you and your family. The programs of the Chabad New Canaan Jewish Center are held in various locations, all located in New Canaan.

### Temple Sinai (Reform Synagogue)

458 Lakeside Drive; Stamford, CT 06903  
203.322.1649

[www.templesinaistamford.org](http://www.templesinaistamford.org)  
**Service Schedule:**

1st, 3rd & 5th Friday – 6pm in person and via zoom  
2nd & 4th – 7:30pm

#### **Recurring Events:**

**Fridays at 12 PM:** Torah Study

**Second Saturday at 10:30 AM:** Mussar

**First and Third Fridays at 5:30 PM:** Shabbat Service for Families with Young Children

**First Saturday at 8 AM:** Avodat Halev Discussion Group

### Temple Sholom

300 E. Putnam Ave. Greenwich, CT 06830  
203-869-7191  
[www.templesholom.com](http://www.templesholom.com)

**Services:** In-person and virtual Friday night Shabbat services, 6:30pm & Saturday morning Shabbat services, 10:30am.

#### **Recurring Events:**

**Saturdays at 9 AM:** Shabbat Study via zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/94358392426?pwd=bFJQem9HWFcXU0EzZUM2VENEZmgYUT09#success>



# Chamber of Commerce Supports Downtown

By John Kriz

“My major challenges are the challenges that my member businesses have.” So says Laura Budd, executive director (and sole employee) of the New Canaan Chamber of Commerce, the voice of retailers and other businesses in town. <https://www.newcanaanchamber.com>

### Challenges & Tasks

“The big challenge is people are shopping on their phone,” she continues, “and as more younger people move in” the challenge is to “get that ‘shop local’ message across.”

“The retail environment has changed very much,” stresses Ms. Budd, “so trying to come up with constructive and interesting ways to try to help promote the businesses downtown” is a key task.

What to do? Because so many people are on their phones, the Chamber is “trying to showcase the experience of shopping and dining in town and using popular local influencers to achieve that end,” notes Ms. Budd. Some have already come.

Another big issue? The growth of restaurants. “We see our restaurants and the restaurant environment as very strong.” However, the expansion of the sidewalks, and outdoor dining, has generated blowback from some retailers as there is a trade-off with parking. Restaurants and personal service establishments (such as hair and nail salons) are also more ‘non-Amazonable’ than many other retail categories.

But the ‘sell’ is not just the dining and shopping: it’s the total New Canaan experience, “promoting the town as a unique experience because New Canaan is very unique with all the cultural assets we have on top of amazing restaurants and incredible and incredibly well curated retail stores.”

The renovated Playhouse in the heart of downtown is also becoming a “third place’ [in addition to one’s home and office] for people to gather and enjoy time together” serving up not just movies, but also film lectures, the Pub, trivia nights and Mahjong games. “Anything that brings people into town is going to be helpful,” Ms. Budd stresses.

“I hope through the events that I have and other things that happen in town, like the [Addiction Awareness] Vigil ... that people can really appreciate how lucky we are to have the retailers that we do have. These people are experts. They’re passionate about whatever it is they’re selling or the service that they’re providing.”

Board President Allison Donaldson echoes Ms. Budd’s comments, noting the ongoing challenge of internet competition, with some people window shopping downtown but buying online. “I think in terms of challenge and mission, [it’s] getting the word out there, supporting

our members, being an amplifier for them.”

Ms. Donaldson adds that a recent member survey revealed that around two-thirds of “respondents said they would like social media support and social media boosting. So that’s really getting the word out there, perhaps to a larger audience than just New Canaan, and bring people into our town to shop and eat and have services right here.” And that boosting is underway.

What would Ms. Donaldson like changed? “I don’t think our members truly understand those member benefits and they’re not taking advantage of them as fully as they could.”

So how are things going downtown? Vehicular and foot traffic are certainly active. Retail street-level vacancies are few. Restaurants are busy. Downtown New Canaan is vibrant.

### Town Relations

A key function of the Chamber is that it is “a liaison between the municipality, the nonprofits, the business community and the residents,” Ms. Budd notes. If something is happening in the downtown area, such as road work, Ms. Budd can quickly help spread the word.

TEDAC – the town’s Tourism & Economic Development Advisory Committee – is one venue to get New Canaan’s business community’s ideas across (Ms. Budd is a member) as well as to keep everyone informed. In addition, Ms. Budd has “gotten along very well” with the First Selectmen, and even rents office space from the town in the Town Hall Annex (the A-frame building to the west of Town Hall).

### The Big Events

About those events... The Chamber runs several large community events that not only draw families downtown, but also encourage them to linger and explore new venues.

The ‘Big Three’ are the Sidewalk Sale, held over a Friday night and Saturday in July, the Halloween Parade, which especially draws families, and the Holiday Stroll in December, with all the lights sparkling.

Ms. Budd says each event “shows off the town, and then makes people slow down, and they’re walking down the street and maybe looking into the stores.”

The Chamber also has business-to-business responsibilities, and not just business-to-consumer. To that end, the Chamber organizes “networking events where businesses can interact with each other.” One example is a ‘Meet the Members’ breakfast in a restaurant in town. People get to talking and then it’s “Oh my gosh, I met this guy and now we’re going to try to do some business together.”

In early Spring New Canaan’s First Selectman speaks to the business

*How lucky we are to have the retailers that we do have.*



community, answers members’ questions and hears their concerns. There’s also a holiday party. And beyond New Canaan the Chamber has organized events with Chambers from Wilton, Darien and Ridgefield to share ideas and look for ways to strengthen everyone’s success. Ms. Budd has also organized “some women’s networking series where we bring in women entrepreneurs to speak to other women.” These efforts all fall under “connecting’ as kind of an overall goal.”

### Parking

“The people always complain about the parking,” notes Ms. Budd, and one of her biggest challenges is “combating public perception that there’s not enough parking in town.” She says there are 1600 public spots

in the downtown area, which include the Lumberyard, which has free parking after 10:30am on weekdays.

“I think the current administration is really tackling it head on by flipping around our parking situation. I think the retailers are very nervous about this and I really believe this will reduce some congestion in downtown along with what they’re doing in the Playhouse lot and the accessible ramp, which will also help delivery people.” (The town is building a new, accessible walkway and ramp between the Playhouse and Le Pain Quotidien, and a designated loading zone at the top, to try to reduce trucks from double-parking during deliveries on Elm Street.)

### Members Speak

“I am very happy” with

the Chamber, says Carl Franco, of Francos Wine Merchants on Elm Street. “In the past few years I think they’ve been carrying the torch on town events, and have introduced a few new ones over the past few years, and I think they’re doing a great job with it. They’re involved in the community.”

Would he tell a new merchant to join the Chamber? “I would tell them to join.” And why? “It’s an important part of being part of the town.”

One of the key things the Chamber does, in Mr. Franco’s view, is not only liaising between town government and merchants, and giving merchants a heads-up about new initiatives or disruptions (and you cannot provide too much lead time, he stresses), but also promoting New Canaan as a destination.

Phil Williams of New Canaan Music and a former Board member of the Chamber, says “we feel like our voice is heard when we have concerns.” As well, he thinks the Chamber does a good job with its events, with the Holiday Stroll being particularly beneficial.

“We love the event” he notes. “It’s a good one. I mean, everybody’s really kind of downtown. A lot of new residents feel the kind of hominess and the community sense. I think that really builds a sense of community for a lot of people.”

Jennifer Tauber DPM, whose medical office is on Cherry Street and who is a Board member of the Chamber, said the Chamber was “awesome” in helping her get her practice off the ground.

### Organization

The Chamber has nearly 350 members – retailers, other businesses as well as some not-for-profits. Businesses not based in New Canaan can also join. Membership cost depends on the employee base of the business, with annual fees – the Chamber’s main revenue source – starting at a little more than \$300. The Chamber is governed by an 18-member board, which oversees the Chamber’s projects, and helps to guide and direct it.

What do you get as a member? Ms. Budd believes, “the number one benefit is that you can put your events -- whether if you were a nonprofit and you had a big fundraising event or if you were a retailer that was having a big sale or a trunk show or something -- you can put that on our community calendar, which is right on our website. And then you can be in our email newsletter that is sent to 6,400 residents and businesses.” As well, “that newsletter is one of our greatest tools to help amplify our members’ voices.”

In addition to those benefits, and the member networking events and big events like the Sidewalk Sale, there’s the liaison work the Chamber does with the Town

of New Canaan.

### Chamber History

A major turning point for the Chamber was 2009 – the midst of the Great Recession -- when Tucker Murphy, former Town Council member and current ‘right hand’ to First Selectman Dionna Carlson, took over leadership. The Chamber was “in a state,” she says.

At that time there was also the New Canaan Village Association -- a parallel group that, says Ms. Murphy, felt that the Chamber was too focused on business-to-business activities, and not “focusing on our actual downtown.” She helped to merge the two groups and “just really make everyone understand that our downtown was so special and the heart of the town.”

She went door-to-door to introduce herself, and to listen to members’ ideas and concerns. To generate energy she devised events such as a battle of the bands and a photography contest. A new logo was created, and a new mission statement, with the Chamber’s emphasis being ‘Connecting the Community with Commerce.’ The Chamber’s Community Calendar was also launched, designed to be a central source for town events.

In contrast to neighboring towns, with multiple retail areas and strip developments which are not that walkable, New Canaan “is different because of the way our town is set up,” stresses Ms. Murphy, “which is a total bonus and benefit to New Canaan that everything happens right here, that the train drops you right at the end of the line, right in the center of town. And that then allows the Chamber to really focus on the downtown, just one downtown.”

“I wanted the Chamber just to be front and center with everything that was happening in town,” she stressed.

Laura Budd was hired in 2012, working with Ms. Murphy, and she took over in 2020 – the start of COVID.

### What’s Next?

“I think our downtown is so unique and it has so many positives and so many really interesting stores and services, so I can’t imagine wanting to change the mix,” says Ms. Budd. “If I could snap my fingers, I would want people to slow down and really spend more time downtown and appreciate how lucky we are to have the stores that we have.”

Board President Donaldson puts it this way: “I think it’s important for our members to know that our door is always open. We do want your feedback. And in terms of the community, we hope that -- I mean, New Canaan is so special. A special ambiance. A great size. We have some great retail restaurants, services in town. I just hope that people continue to support local businesses and enable us to continue to thrive.”





**Photos Courtesy of the Chamber of Commerce**



Make safety your priority on the roads this holiday season.

Are you concerned about a friend's or loved one's drinking, cannabis, or drug habits?  
Are you worried about yourself?

- Contact Al-Anon or Alateen at 1-888-825-2666.
- For help with drug abuse, reach out to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357.
- For additional resources and support, contact New Canaan Human Services at 203-594-3076.

The New Canaan Health and Human Services Commission wishes you a warm, safe, and joyful holiday season.

# Christmas Eve on God's Acre



## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:00pm

Family Worship Service

6:00pm

Worship Service

6:30pm

Caroling on God's Acre

7:00pm

Worship Service

11:00pm

Candlelight Worship Service

LIVESTREAM WORSHIP IS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE.


The Congregational Church of New Canaan

23 Park Street, New Canaan, CT 06840


(203) 966-2651

www.godsacre.org





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**New Canaan Chamber Music**  
Andrew Armstrong, Artistic Director

**The Magnificent Mendelssohn Octet**



Nathan Meltzer  
violin



Simone Porter  
violin



Virgil Moore II  
violin



Hayoung Choi  
violin



Melissa Reardon  
viola



Carlos Walker  
viola



Alice Yoo  
cello



Sara Scanlon  
cello



Andrew Armstrong  
piano

**Thursday, December 11, 3:00pm**  
**Friday, December 12, 7:00pm**

First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan



Tickets at  
**[newcanaanchambermusic.org](http://newcanaanchambermusic.org)**

## Obituaries

### CONTINUED

From Page 8

Chloe Readlinger; Lila and Lucy Jepsen; Dominic and Rocco Salerno; and Leo Jepsen. Bill was predeceased by his granddaughter, Mia Madelyn Jepsen. He is also survived by his brothers C. Christian, John R., and Thomas J. Jepsen.

Bill was a man of wide interests and constant curiosity. A passionate sports fan, he remained a loyal supporter of all things Boston-especially his beloved Red Sox. His relationship with Big Blue, the New York Giants, could best be described as a love-hate relationship, one that nonetheless produced cherished memories of attending Giants games followed by date nights with Mary at Il Vagabondo in New York City.

He loved being outdoors and found great peace walking and hiking the trails in the woods behind his home in Madison, CT-often with his grandchildren at his side. He treasured summers in Cape Cod with Mary and their children, where days at the beach, simple routines, and time together became some of the family’s most enduring traditions. He also cherished his time exploring the world with Mary - trips that enriched their lives and reflected his deep passion for history. Whether running, throwing darts, watching his children’s and grandchildren’s games, or exploring nature, Bill delighted in the simple joy of being together. He was an avid reader of history, a storyteller with impeccable timing, and a man who valued authenticity above all else. He believed deeply in genuine connection and offered kindness freely to whomever he met. His sense of humor was legendary-sharp, quick, and unforgettable. A man of faith and a steady example to others, Bill lived wholly through his family, taking immense pride in immersing himself in their lives.

The family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to the friends and caring staff at Evergreen Woods in North Branford, where Bill spent his last few years. Their warmth, support, and compassion brought him comfort and community, and they remain deeply appreciated.

A visitation will be held on Friday, December 19 at 9:00 a.m. at St. Aloysius Church, 21 Cherry St., New Canaan, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Michael J. Fox Foundation PO Box 5014, Hagerstown, MD 21741-5014; <https://www.michaeljfox.org/>



Robert J. “Kam” Kamerschen, a retired executive whose led several Fortune 500

companies, died on November 15, after a brave battle with Alzheimer’s disease. He was 89 and was a resident of New Canaan, CT, and Orleans, MA, for many years.

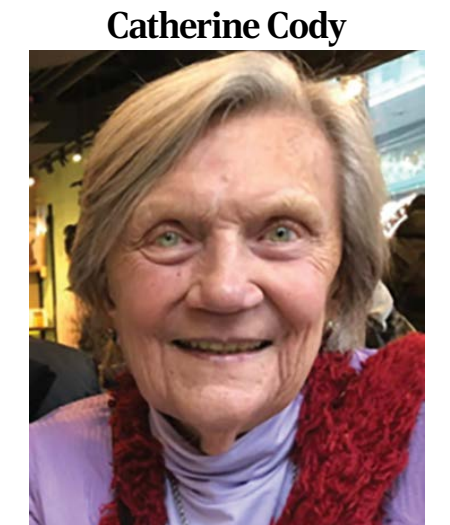
Kam was the Chairman and CEO of Advo, Inc., the nation’s largest direct mail services company, for 10 years. Prior to that, he served as Chairman, CEO or COO of RK0/Six Flags, Marketing Corporation of America, and Chanel and Christian Dior Perfums. He was Group President at Norton Simon, Inc., where his responsibilities included Hunt Wesson Foods, Max Factor, Halston Enterprises, and United Can. Earlier in his career, he held senior marketing executive assignments at Scott Paper Company, Dunkin’ Donuts and Revlon. Following retirement, Kam was an active private investor, and senior advisor to multiple companies and people. Kam took pleasure in being a mentor; you knew he was a fan if you received articles notated with inspirational quotes; “Onward and Upward!” and “The Best Never Rest” were favorites.

Born in Larium, Michigan, on February 16, 1935, Kam was raised in Chicago by his parents, Robert and Elsie. He received his B.S. and MBA with honors from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Kam married the former Judith Campbell in 1958; they recently celebrated their 67th anniversary. An avid athlete, Kam played football, baseball and wrestled in school, and maintained a rigorous exercise routine. He took great pride in his fitness, striving to be the “Jack Lalane” of his generation throughout most of his eighties.

A parishioner at St. Aloysius in New Canaan, Kam also supported the arts and education. He served as a trustee at Emerson College, Columbia College and Hartford University. An active alumnus of Miami University, he endowed a scholarship there for Women in Business. He was also a trustee at the Wadsworth Antheneum Museum of Art and the Bushnell Theater, both in Hartford, CT.

He is survived by Judith, and his 3 daughters: Kathryn, Carol and Jean. He was known affectionately as “King” by his 5 grandchildren: Campbell, Jake, Charlie, Julia and Lucette. Kam is also survived by his brother, Dr. David Kamerschen. He was predeceased by his parents, and sister, Robyn Kriz.

A celebration of Kam’s life is planned for Spring, 2026. In lieu of flowers, please consider memorial donations to the Alzheimer’s Association or the American Cancer Society.



Catherine Leone “Cathy” Cody passed away on Oct. 30, 2025, following complications related to a recent illness. She was 85. Cathy died at The Enclave at Rye, New York. She had lived in New York City for many years.

Born in New Canaan, Cathy was the daughter of the late Therese Fish Cody and the late Dr. Thomas P. Cody, a longtime and well-known New Canaan physician and civic leader. She was a fourth generation New Canaan Cody and, on her mother’s side, a descendent of Roger Williams, founder of Rhode

Island. She attended the New Canaan Country School and the Low-Heywood School in Stamford and was graduated from Boston College with a M.A. in Social Work.

Cathy built a meaningful career as a licensed clinical social worker, spending many years as a psychiatric social worker at Greenwich House, an early settlement house in Manhattan where she led group counseling and individual therapy sessions supporting individuals facing addiction and mental-health challenges. She believed in the dignity of every person she worked with and was skilled in opening meaningful conversations during difficult sessions.

Her life-long love of movement began early – swimming and tennis at the Shore & Country Club in Norwalk, skiing in northern New England, and running, including finishing the New York City Marathon twice! She never missed cheering the Marathon runners as they passed her building on Fifth Avenue across from Central Park.

She was also devoted to the daily practice of Tai Chi and became a Senior Teacher at the New York School of Tai Chi Chuan, traveling most recently to Sardinia to join an annual Tai Chi Retreat. She also became a devoted student at the Arica School of spiritual enlightenment, integrating both Tai Chi and Arican practices into her understanding of compassion, balance and personal growth. One of her favorite reflections was “Tai Chi is about strength through softness, balance and gentile fluidity”. Until the very last days of her illness she joined a daily Tai Chi ‘zoom’ where friends and fellow students met to practice together.

Throughout her years in New York, Cathy always returned home to New Canaan. She especially loved Waveny Park summer concerts, swimming in the pool, and the Memorial Day Parade -- after which she made it a habit to visit local cemeteries to honor friends and family before rejoining relatives for the traditional picnic.

Cathy is survived by her sister, Terry C. Spring of New Canaan; her brothers James J. Cody (Tania), George F. Cody, William J. Cody and sister-in-law, Judith Cyr Cody (Tom) and by 13 nieces and nephews – James W. Spring, Elizabeth H. Spring, Thomas C.C. Spring (Laura); Dr. Heather Cody Hazelett (Gary), Christana Cody Laycock (Bill), Rachelle Cody Cather (Robbie), Alyssa Cody Guthrie (David), Rebecca Cody, Dr. James J. Cody (Amanda), Jennifer Cody Castillo (Carlos), Sharon Cody Wyatt (Dr. Nathan), Caroline Cody, and John Cody (Kelly) – as well as many great-nieces and grand-nephews. She is predeceased by brother Thomas Hayde Cody (Judith) and her longtime partner, Warren McClendon.

A private burial is planned in St. John’s Cemetery in Norwalk. In lieu of flowers the family suggests donations to Doctors Without Borders.

*The New Canaan Sentinel does not charge for obituaries. Every member of the community deserves to be remembered and honored without families facing added financial burdens. Obituaries may be sent to [Caroll@GreenwichSentinel.com](mailto:Caroll@GreenwichSentinel.com).*

*The cost of publishing obituaries is covered by The Sentinel Foundation, a nonprofit that supports the local Top 5 Things to Do Today daily email, obituaries, education and entertainment pages, worship pages, and sponsorship of charitable organizations and events.*

# Waveny Inn Resident Celebrates 90th Birthday with Heartfelt Wish

When most people reach a milestone birthday, they dream of travel, luxury, or a special event. For Lea Allen Gebauer, a resident of The Inn, Waveny LifeCare Network’s independent living community, her wish for her 90th birthday is far simpler and more meaningful: Lea wants to see the art and design work created by her two sons, Hale and Harry Allen, presented in the gallery at The Inn, the place she calls home.

Waveny is proud to honor Lea’s wish by displaying this artwork. It celebrates not only her 90 years of life but also the creativity she has inspired in those around her. It also marks the first time the brothers have shown their work together. Residents, families, friends, neighbors, and community members are invited to come see the artwork between December 8th through January 30th, 2026. Visitors are welcome to view the art exhibition between 10:00am and 6:00pm daily. For more information about this special birthday celebration, please contact Katerina Tchakarov at (203) 594 5333.

**A Mother’s Influence and a Sons’ Tribute**  
For Lea, this exhibition is more than a birthday gathering. It is a profoundly personal celebration of creativity, family legacy, and a lifetime of inspiration. Lea herself is a painter, ceramicist, and arts educator. She studied undergraduate at Vassar College and later received her Masters in Childhood Education from Rutgers University. All the while she studied art including many years studying ceramics at Raritan Valley Community College in New Jersey and since moving to New Canaan in 2000, at Silvermine Arts Center.

**About Hale Allen**  
Hale Allen, a painter and visual artist from Philadelphia, will present new work from his Wire Series. Hale studied with sculptor Joe Moss and landscape architect Ted Browning at the University of Delaware. He continued his training at the Art Students League in New York City and at the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts where he studied with master artist James McGinley.  
Hale earned a Master of Fine Arts in

Painting from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art in 1994. His work has appeared in many shows. He was featured in The Edge Effect at the Katonah Museum of Art in 2020, in the Penn Journal of Arts and Sciences, and in the Art in Abstraction exhibition at the Maryland Federation of Art. Please visit [haleallen.com](http://haleallen.com).

**About Harry Allen**  
Harry Allen, is a celebrated industrial designer who lives in Pound Ridge. Harry trained at Pratt Institute and gained wide attention in 1994 for the interior design of Moss, a design store in New York City. His work includes interiors, furniture, lighting, packaging, and accessories. He has become most well-known for his Reality collection for Areaware, including the Bank in the Form of a Pig. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and many other museums. More information can be found at [harryallendesign.com](http://harryallendesign.com). For this exhibition, Harry will present work from his new ceramics project called Fuse.



YOUR NEWS BRIEF  
CONTINUED From Page 1

AROUND TOWN

Road Closures on Dec 5

New Canaan will close two streets on Friday, December 5, for the Holiday Stroll. Elm Street’s one-way section will close at 3 pm, and the section of South Avenue that runs from Elm Street to the Morse Court Driveway will close at noon.

Quartier Groundbreaking Ceremony

On November 21, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for The Quartier, a new residential development at Cherry Street and Burtis Avenue in New Canaan. The project will include one- to three-bedroom units priced from \$2 million to \$6 million, with phase one expected in fall 2026. Planned amenities include concierge service, indoor parking, private terraces, and EV charging stations.

LOCAL BUSINESSES AND  
NONPROFITS

The Inn Hosts Thanksgiving Gathering



Recently, The Inn held a special Thanksgiving gathering with residents, New Canaan police, fire, EMS, and Staying Put staff. Photo credit: Waveny LifeCare Network.

NCHS Musicians Perform at the Inn



On November 25, New Canaan High School musicians performed at the Inn for residents. Photo credit: Waveny LifeCare

Network.

Dr. Luizzi Speaks to Rotary Club



Recently, Dr. Bryan Luizzi briefed the New Canaan Rotary Club on district performance and upcoming initiatives. He outlined plans to extend the phone-free policy to the high school in 2026-27 and described the rollout of a new classroom audio system with translation features. He also noted that overall enrollment remains steady, with a projected increase in kindergarten numbers. Pictured L-R: Tom Ferguson and Dr. Bryan Luizzi. Photo credit: New Canaan Rotary Club.

Lyon Speaks to Staying Put



The Gentlemen of Staying Put recently hosted Frank Lyon at a recent coffee, where he provided information about AmeriCares and shared firsthand updates on conditions in Gaza and Israel. Photo credit: Staying Put in New Canaan.

P.T. Barnum Discussion



Recently, Staying Put members attended a discussion on P.T. Barnum led by Flannery Pillion-Gardner of the New Canaan Library. Photo credit: Staying Put

in New Canaan.

Staying Put Delivers Poinsettias



This week, Staying Put volunteers delivered poinsettias to members as part of the organization’s annual holiday effort. Photo credit: Staying Put in New Canaan.

SCHOOLS

NCHS Annual Bonfire



On November 25, New Canaan High School held its annual bonfire with food, music, and student activities. The event recognized all NCHS fall sports teams. Photo credit: New Canaan Public Schools.

NCHS Turkey Trot



On November 23, New Canaan High School held a Turkey Trot with a staff costume race and a teacher relay. Jay Devito won and retained the “Terry the Turkey” trophy for the physical education department. Photo credit: New Canaan Public Schools.

Saxe Fifth-Grade Leadership Team



The Saxe Intermediate’s fifth-grade leadership team opened its leadership

unit with a visit from First Selectman Dionna Carlson. She explained her path to public service and outlined key leadership practices. Photo credit: New Canaan Public Schools.

SLS Students Perform in Nutcracker

Juliet Lannamann ’26 and Ellie Briggs ’27 of St. Lukes School will perform in the New England Academy of Dance’s production of The Nutcracker, running December 12-14 at New Canaan High School.

SPORTS

Marinelli Earns Coaching Award

New Canaan football coach Lou Marinelli has been named the Region 1 recipient of the American Football Coaches Association’s 2025 Power of Influence Award. Marinelli, who has led the program since 1981, has taken the team to 20 straight state tournaments and earned 15 state championships.

NCHS Boys Lacrosse Captains

New Canaan High School Boys Lacrosse announced their Captains for 2026: Brady Mazabras, Blake Schwartz, Finn Roeder, Cameron Lyden, and Cole Campisi.

ACROSS CT

Aldi Holiday Bark Recall

Silvestri Sweets has recalled two Choceur holiday bark products sold at Aldi after a packaging error caused undeclared pecans in one variety and undeclared wheat in the other. Both items share lot number 29225 and have best-by dates in 2026. No illnesses have been reported, and consumers are urged to discard the products. For more information, call (630) 232-2500.

Sale of Aquarion Denied

State regulators rejected Eversource’s proposal to sell Aquarion Water Company to the South-Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority. Multiple towns, including New Canaan, opposed the deal, citing concerns about higher rates, reduced municipal revenue, and governance issues. Regulators agreed the sale was not in the public interest.



NEW CANAAN FAMILIES:  
You Are Not Alone

When someone you love is living with Alzheimer’s or another form of dementia, the journey can feel overwhelming. That’s why we created **The Navigator Program** — an exclusive **FREE** service for **New Canaan residents**, offering personalized guidance, comfort and support every step of the way.

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- Support Groups
- Resources and Services
- Respite Care



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# REAL ESTATE DASHBOARD

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FEATURED OPEN HOUSES				
Get Your Open Houses Into the MLS by Wednesday at Noon for a Listing Here				
Address	Price	Day	Time	Broker
12 Lincoln Drive	\$1,095,000	SAT	12:00-3:00	BHS
50 Harrison Avenue	\$2,159,000	SAT	1:00-4:00	William Raveis
317 Park Street	\$3,750,000	SAT & SUN	1:00-3:00	WPSIR
26 Pequot Lane	\$5,495,000	SUN	1:00-3:00	Coldwell Banker
928 West Road	\$8,595,000	SUN	1:00-3:00	WPSIR

NEW LISTINGS						
Address	List Price	SqFt	Price/SqFt	AC	BR	FB
12 Lincoln Drive	\$1,095,000	2,156	\$508	.32	4	2
276 Greenley Road	\$5,995,000	7,605	\$788	4.64	6	5
119 Proprietors Crossing	\$7,999,999	12,510	\$639	4	6	6

NEW SALES							
Address	Original List	List Price	Sold Price	DOM	BR	FB	Acres
79 Locust Avenue #212	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$450,000	6	1	1	
96 East Avenue Unit C	\$999,000	\$999,000	\$1,020,000	6	3	2	
1038 West Road	\$2,150,000	\$2,150,000	\$2,400,000	9	4	3	4.04
100 Spring Water Lane	\$2,399,000	\$2,399,000	\$2,500,000	8	7	4	2.11
136 South Avenue	\$2,999,000	\$2,999,000	\$3,207,160	62	6	3	0.27
1187 Smith Ridge Road	\$3,295,000	\$2,995,000	\$2,930,000	148	5	3	4.04



BY JOHN ENGEL

This three-part series explores how human psychology, stress responses, and decision-making styles shape the way people buy and sell homes. Each week examines a different dimension of the same idea: Real estate reveals people more clearly than almost any other process. We begin with the framework – how a cultural artifact like Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus unexpectedly offers a vocabulary for what unfolds every day in kitchens, hallways, and inspection reports.

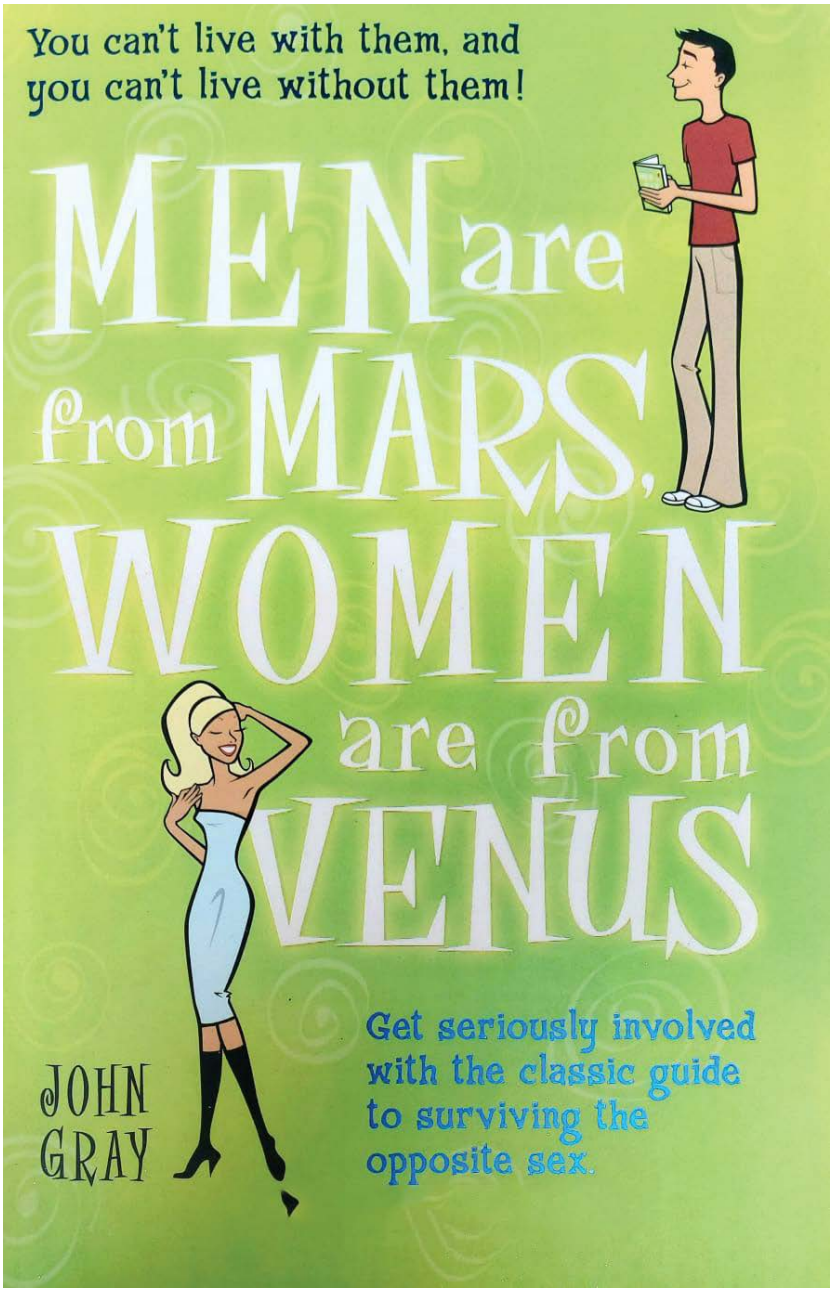
I didn't pick up *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* by Dr. John Gray on my own. A friend in town recommended it because he said it helped him make sense of himself and his marriage, and that was enough to get my attention. Whether you love it, hate it, or haven't thought about it since the Clinton administration, it's impossible to ignore its place in the culture: In the 1990s, the book sold 15 million copies, outselling every nonfiction hardcover except the Bible.

My wife and I began with a healthy dose of skepticism, but as we listened on a long car ride to North Carolina, we found ourselves occasionally pausing the audiobook and exclaiming, "A-ha, see there," when something rang true – not universally, not predictively, but close enough to experiences we'd already had that it sparked a short conversation. The value wasn't in taking every claim at face value but in the way the framework, however dated or exaggerated, gave us language for patterns we sometimes notice without naming.

This is a real estate column. We weren't listening to understand real estate, but there's a lot of real estate in the book. So, I'm diving in on that aspect.

Caves, Closings, and Contrasting Reactions

One of Gray's most famous images comes early in the book: "When a man is stressed, he retreats into his cave; when a woman is stressed, she seeks to talk." The cave, he says, is the place men go to gather themselves, solve problems internally, or simply shut out the world for a bit. Women, in his telling, move in the opposite direction – toward connection, conversation, and reassurance. It's a crude sketch, but he uses it to explain why two people under the same pressure



One of many covers from over the years.

can look like they're having two completely different experiences.

Here's where the science gets interesting. What Gray describes metaphorically – different stress responses, different comfort thresholds – is exactly what behavioral economists call Prospect Theory. People fear losses more than they value gains, and you see it in real estate constantly. Inspections trigger loss aversion. Early-season listings trigger loss aversion. Even staging budgets trigger loss aversion. One partner sees a \$30,000 staging plan as an investment with a likely return. The other sees the exact same \$30,000 as a potential loss. Economists call it loss aversion. Gray calls it different emotional wiring. Out in the field, it looks like hesitation, second-guessing, or walking away from a house they love.

Fear, Financing, and Fallout

Loss aversion isn't just a theory; it's one of the most replicated findings in behavioral science. Nobel winners Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky quantified it in 1979: On average, people react to losses with about twice the emotional intensity of equivalent gains. And the real estate industry sees this play out in very measurable ways.

NAR reports that roughly 20–

25% of accepted offers fall apart before closing, most commonly during inspections – the precise moment when buyers shift from imagining what they stand to gain to imagining what they might lose. Zillow's 2023 Consumer Housing Trends Report data shows that buyers who describe themselves as "risk averse" are nearly 40% more likely to withdraw after identifying potential defects, even if the repairs are minor. You can practically watch the emotional wiring switch over: Hope gets replaced by threat-scanning, possibility by caution.

Gray gave us the metaphor; Prospect Theory gives us the mechanics. Real estate provides the perfect laboratory in which to observe it. What I see in the post-COVID supply-constrained market are bidding wars, pressure on buyer and seller to decide more quickly, with imperfect information, and to release contingencies. This leads to even higher failure rates than 25% as buyers bail out or sellers jump to an improved offer.

Safety, Stretching, and Split Reactions

Across large national financial studies, women consistently report lower risk tolerance than men, even when controlling for income, education, and net worth.

Gray gave us the metaphor; Prospect Theory gives us the mechanics. Real estate provides the perfect laboratory in which to observe it.

Vanguard's 2022 Investor Behavior Report showed that women were 40% less likely to trade impulsively during volatility and were significantly less likely to take on leveraged positions. In real estate, this shows up immediately: Women tend to prefer financial safety, lower debt loads, and homes that feel stable and predictable. Men are more likely to stretch for opportunity or upside. These patterns show up consistently in the data.

Week One Summary

This week's column introduced the basic framework: stress responses, loss-aversion, and risk tolerance aren't abstract concepts. They show up directly in how people react to inspections, staging, bidding wars, and debt. The same

facts land differently on different internal wiring.

Next week, column two will stay with the same theme but move closer to the ground, following couples and sellers through real situations where these patterns shape what actually happens to a listing or an offer.

John Engel is a Realtor with The Engel Team at Douglas Elliman. This month John snagged a rope around his boat propeller, impacting his ability to steer and maneuver in Norwalk Harbor, and limped over to the gas dock where he stripped down, went overboard, cut the line with a knife, and freed the prop. In our family, there are Mars jobs and Venus jobs, and freeing the prop is a Mars job.

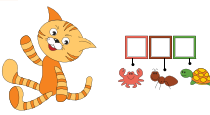


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League story in Section 1*



## Wildly Successful: The Snow Goose



BY JIM KNOX

When the mercury drops and the first flakes fly, they wing in from the far north. A quick glance persuaded me it was a pair of swans. A closer look revealed creatures far more unusual, at least in Fairfield County. The animals in question grazed on the late fall grass along the edge of the pond.

Due to their unpredictable visits to the Nutmeg State, Snow Geese, *Chen caerulescens*, are always a memorable sight. With its compact build, snow-white plumage, black wing tips, and pink bill and legs, the Snow Goose stands out among its familiar Canada Goose kin, which it frequently accompanies. Breeding in the Arctic tundra, these birds migrate south in late fall and early winter, foraging for

tubers, roots and dried grasses along wetlands, agricultural fields, and marshes across Canada and much of the United States.

Hunted to near extinction to just a few thousand birds by the early 1900's, Snow Geese were given full federal protection. Like many species, that protection led to a rebound in numbers. Aided by the adaptability of the birds, which widened their food choices from wetland grasses and tubers to include agricultural crops and their roots, the population exploded. As a result, this North American species is thriving among the west coast, east coast, and mid-continental populations and today approaches 20 million birds!

With two main recognized subspecies, as well as a less common "blue" phase which

exhibits beautiful silvery-gray plumage occurring in both, the Snow Goose exhibits variations on a theme of remarkable success. Specifically, that success is of a superbly adapted Arctic species with the adaptability to range far south of its northern breeding grounds above the treeline in the vast tundra.

Designed by nature to exploit the extremely limited Arctic spring and withstand the ravages of deadly weather, Snow Goose goslings hatch with bodies completely covered with down and their eyes wide open, unlike their more southerly kin. These tiny subpolar hatchlings can venture out from their nests to walk, feed, swim, and dive within just hours of hatching. Their voracious feeding is essential in enabling them to gain more than a quarter pound



of vital weight each day. To fuel their rapidly growing bodies, Snow Goose goslings can accompany their parents more than 50 miles from their nest site within just three weeks of hatching!

Another attribute of Snow Goose parental behavior fosters protection for the little ones. While each pair aggressively guards their nest territory, expecting mothers will roll the eggs of trespassing pairs into their nests and raise the young as their own, thereby ensuring protection for greater numbers of young and aiding the survival of the entire flock.

The form of the Snow Goose is perfectly designed for life on the forbidding tundra. With a length of 27-33 inches and a weight of 4.5-9 pounds, these Arctic waterfowl are compact to conserve vital body heat in an unforgiving environment. With its legs positioned centrally beneath its body, the Snow Goose can navigate the barren ground and shallow waters of the Arctic in summer with great balance and agility. The

serrations lining the edge of its bill enable it to readily dig up and cut up roots and tubers, accessible in the Arctic soil. The primary feathers forming its trademark black wingtips are reinforced and can withstand tremendous stresses—a key attribute for birds making migrations of up to 5,000 miles (about twice the width of the United States) between their nesting grounds and their winter range.

While smaller family groups typically disperse throughout Connecticut, Snow Geese of all subspecies tend to form massive flocks of up to several hundred thousand birds along main stopovers of their three continental migration routes. Putting the term, "safety in numbers" to the test, these huge congregations of birds may attract predators but, simultaneously withstand such predation.

As is often the case with nature's creatures, their adaptability to a human-influenced landscape can create

challenges. With the birds' booming populations shifting gears to feed off agricultural lands, the Snow Goose's feeding habit of uprooting can destroy valuable crops. Our challenge lies in balancing the welfare of a population of superbly adapted creatures with the needs of human populations.

Late fall in New England is a time of spectacular natural change. In the weeks ahead, as you stroll, hike, or kayak the land and waters of coastal Connecticut, keep a sharp eye out for the brilliant white birds amid flocks of Canada Geese. A rare sight decades ago, the presence of the Snow Goose is both a welcome visit of our neighbors from the far north and sure sign that, with a little help, nature will endure.

*Jim Knox serves as the Curator of Education for Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo and as a science adviser for The Bruce Museum. Jim enjoys sharing his passion for wildlife conservation with audiences in Connecticut and beyond.*

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**Submit your events at:**  
[newcanaansentinel.com/submit-an-event/](http://newcanaansentinel.com/submit-an-event/)

<b>TOWN MEETINGS</b>
<b><u>Monday, December 8</u></b>
<u>Affordable Housing Committee</u> 7-8 p.m., Location not posted at time of publication.
<b><u>Tuesday, December 9</u></b>
<u>Pension Committee</u> 11 a.m.- 12 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room
<u>Board of Finance</u> 7-8 p.m., Location not posted at time of publication.
<u>Ethics Board</u> 7-8 p.m., Location not posted at time of publication.
<b><u>Wednesday, December 10</u></b>
<u>Parks and Recreation Commission</u> 7-8 p.m., Lapham Community Center
<b><u>Thursday, December 11</u></b>
<u>Conservation Commission</u> 12-1 p.m., Town Hall Board Room
<u>Utilities Commission</u> 7-8 p.m., Town Hall Board Room

**December 5**

**COFFEE AND CONVERSATION**  
**8:30 – 9:30 AM at the Lapham Center**  
**Sponsored by the New Canaan Sentinel for a weekly community coffee and conversation.**

**Giftng for Good**

4 & 6 PM at Grace Farms  
In the spirit of giving, gather with friends, family, and fellow community members to assemble care packages. This night offers festive music, warm tea, and engaging winter crafts for all ages to enjoy. Register at <https://shorturl.at/F6IMn>.

**Holiday Stroll**

5:30-8:30 PM in Downtown New Canaan  
The Stroll functions as New Canaan’s answer to “Small Business Saturday”. Walk under the lights, browse in the stores, watch a show performed by young local talent, eat delicious food, and take a selfie with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

**The Little Plucky’s 2 Year Anniversary**  
6 PM at the Little Plucky  
Go stop by during the New Canaan Holiday Stroll for cocktails and delicious bites. Shoppers will receive a complimentary gift with purchase PLUS 10% off on all sales made.

**Charlotte’s Web**  
7 PM at the Powerhouse Theatre  
The Children's Literature Association named Charlotte's Web "the best American children's book of the past 200 years". Joseph Robinette, working with the advice of E.B. White, has created a play that captures this work in a thrilling and utterly practical theatrical presentation. This is a beautiful, knowing play about friendship. Tickets are available at <https://tpnc.org>.

**December 6**

**Holiday Stroll**  
10 AM- 3 PM in Downtown New Canaan  
Catch up with Santa who will be at Houlihan Lawrence. While the children wait to share their wish list with Santa, they will be entertained by a magician making balloon animals.

**Family Drop-In: Winter Wonderland**  
10 AM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center  
Join for a Winter Wonderland of crafts, stories, and seasonal fun for all ages. There will be festive crafts and a special winter story with Miss Rebecca from the library. Register at <https://carriagebarn.org/event/familydropin/>.

**A Contemporary Painting Workshop with Melissa Benedek**  
10:30 AM- 2:30 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center  
In this expressive painting workshop with Melissa Benedek, you’ll explore color, texture, and movement with your brush in a relaxed, creative setting. All levels are welcome — from curious beginners to experienced artists looking to reignite their creative spark. Register at <https://shorturl.at/LdDPn>.

**Charlotte’s Web**  
7 PM at the Powerhouse Theatre  
The Children's Literature Association named Charlotte's Web "the best American children's book of the past 200 years". Joseph Robinette, working with the advice of E.B. White, has created a play that captures this work in a thrilling and utterly practical

# Calendar of Events for Your Fridge

theatrical presentation. This is a beautiful, knowing play about friendship. Tickets are available at <https://tpnc.org>.

**December 7**

**Cookie Decorating**  
1 PM at Grace Farms  
Decorate winter-inspired cookies with the entire family. Cookies will be provided. Tickets are \$12/members, \$15/non-members, and available at <https://shorturl.at/8nt2L>.

**Charlotte’s Web**  
2 PM at the Powerhouse Theatre  
The Children's Literature Association named Charlotte's Web "the best American children's book of the past 200 years". Joseph Robinette, working with the advice of E.B. White, has created a play that captures this work in a thrilling and utterly practical theatrical presentation. This is a beautiful, knowing play about friendship. Tickets are available at <https://tpnc.org>.

**Holiday Concert with Whim n’ Rhythm**  
3 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center  
Join a festive afternoon of music & wine to kick-off the Holiday season. The NCHS Madrigal Ensemble will open the concert and perform three numbers to kick off the afternoon. Tickets are \$35/members, \$40/non-members, and available at <https://carriagebarn.org/event/holiday-whim-n-rhythm/>.

**Y Winter Wonderland**  
3-5 PM at the New Canaan YMCA  
Get ready for festive holiday fun with a variety of kids and family activities, including crafts, games, cookies & cocoa, a special visit from Santa, and more. Free & open to the community. To register, call (203) 966-4528 or visit [www.newcanaanymca.org](http://www.newcanaanymca.org).

**Drop in Holiday Calligraphy Series**  
4-6 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center  
Get holiday-ready with a festive, hands-on calligraphy course designed for adults of all levels. You can join the full series (November 23, 30, December 7 & 14) or drop in for individual sessions. More information is available at <https://carriagebarn.org/holiday-calligraphy-series/>.

**December 8**

**Open Bridge with the New Canaan Men’s Club**  
10 AM at the Lapham Center  
All are welcome to join in the fun and friendly bridge games. Les Kurian and Phil Evensen will provide supervision and guidance for all skill levels. Whether you're an experienced player or completely new to the game, you are welcome to join. You do not have to be a member of the Men's Club to play. Free. No registration required.

**Fit for Life with Mike**  
12 PM at the Lapham Center  
This class focuses on upper, lower, and core muscle strength while emphasizing posture and balance. Participants use their own body weight and stretch bands in a power circuit of exercises. It is a dynamic and safe program, and every aspect is scalable to almost any fitness level. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**December Candlelit Sound Bath**  
6:30 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center  
After a brief grounding meditation, you’ll be enveloped in a symphony of harmonious vibrations, produced by an assortment of crystal and Himalayan singing bowls, chimes, gongs, drums and more. Tickets are \$40/person and available at <https://carriagebarn.org/event/candlelit-sound-bath-6/>.

**December 9**

**Yale Alley Cats A Cappella Performance**  
7 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett Auditorium  
Get in the spirit with a holiday performance by the Yale Alley Cats, the globally-renowned cappella singing group from Yale University that has been making music around the world since their founding in 1943. Register at <https://shorturl.at/BNQo2>.

**December 10**

**Open Bridge with the New Canaan Men’s Club**  
10 AM at the Lapham Center  
All are welcome to join in the fun and friendly bridge games. Les Kurian and Phil Evensen will provide supervision and guidance for all skill levels. Whether you're an experienced player or completely new to the game, you are welcome to join. You do not have to be a member of the Men's Club to play. Free. No registration required.

**Drop in Holiday Calligraphy Series**  
12-2 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center  
Get holiday-ready with a festive, hands-on

calligraphy course designed for adults of all levels. You can join the full series (November 12, 19, December 3 & 10) or drop in for individual sessions. More information is available at <https://carriagebarn.org/holiday-calligraphy-series/>.

**Exchange Club Holiday Party**  
11:30 AM at Waveny House  
Enjoy a festive lunch with gifts and a special visit included. Space is limited; call (203) 594-3620 to register.

**Billiards for Everyone with Mike Bacon**  
2-4 PM at the Lapham Center  
If you’re looking to have some fun, learn to play pool, or just play a game, join Mike on Wednesdays. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**United Nations Lecture**  
7 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett Auditorium  
The program will begin with a recorded message from the United Nations Development Program’s Head of Office for Gaza, followed by a presentation by Dr. Maija Cheung, Assistant Professor of Surgery at Yale University and Chief Medical Officer for KidsOR. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/United-Nations-Action-in-Conflict>.

**December 11**

**Free Medicare Counseling**  
By appointment at the Lapham Center  
Dick Neville is a CHOICES certified Medicare counselor providing free, objective, person-centered assistance about Medicare options and related benefits including: enrolling, choosing a supplemental plan and Part D prescription drug plan, and understanding Medicare Advantage plans. Sessions are offered free of charge to New Canaan residents and Town employees. Call (203) 594-3620 to schedule an appointment.

**Holiday Card Making Workshop**  
10:30 AM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center  
Join a watercolor holiday card making workshop. Get into the holiday spirit by crafting stunning watercolor holiday cards, gift tags or place cards. Register at <https://carriagebarn.org/event/holiday-card-making/>.

**Ask the Attorney with Nedder and Associates**  
2-4 PM at the Lapham Center  
An attorney from Nedder and Associates, LLC will be available for a free, private, fifteen-minute consultations to answer your legal or financial questions. Please call (203) 594-3620 to schedule your appointment.

**New Canaan Chamber Music | “The Magnificent Mendelssohn Octet”**  
3 PM at the First Presbyterian Church  
The concert will be a veritable showcase of seasoned professionals and a quartet of rising stars. Tickets are available at <https://newcanaanchambermusic.org/tickets/>.

**Charlotte’s Web**  
7 PM at the Powerhouse Theatre  
The Children's Literature Association named Charlotte's Web "the best American children's book of the past 200 years". Joseph Robinette, working with the advice of E.B. White, has created a play that captures this work in a thrilling and utterly practical theatrical presentation. This is a beautiful, knowing play about friendship. Tickets are available at <https://tpnc.org>.

**December 12**

**COFFEE AND CONVERSATION**  
**8:30 – 9:30 AM at the Lapham Center**  
**Sponsored by the New Canaan Sentinel for a weekly community coffee and conversation.**

**Open Bridge with the New Canaan Men’s Club**  
11:30 AM at the Lapham Center  
All are welcome to join in the fun and friendly bridge games. Les Kurian and Phil Evensen will provide supervision and guidance for all skill levels. Whether you're an experienced player or completely new to the game, you are welcome to join. You do not have to be a member of the Men's Club to play. Free. No registration required.

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**The New England Academy of Dance Presents the Nutcracker Ballet**  
7 PM at the New Canaan High School Auditorium  
Attend the New England Academy of Dance's Nutcracker Ballet, featuring the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra. Tickets are available at [NEADance.com](http://NEADance.com).

**December 13**

**Winter Wonderland**  
10 AM - 1 PM at the New Canaan Nature Center  
Join and be transported into a whole new world as the New Canaan Nature Center transforms into a Winter Wonderland filled with fun and exciting winter holiday activities for the entire family. Registration will be available at <https://newcanaannature.org/winter-wonderland/>.

**Grace Farms Holiday Market**  
10 AM & 5 PM at Grace Farms  
Enjoy a festive day of shopping with a curated selection of gifts. Register at <https://gracefarms.org/event/grace-farms-holiday-market>.

**Cooking Demo: Dumpling Making**  
11 AM at the New Canaan Library, Kend Kitchen & Community Room  
Unlock the art of dumpling making in this demonstration-style class that celebrates flavor, tradition, and technique. You'll learn how to make dumpling dough from scratch, master a variety of folding styles, and prepare delicious fillings that span cultures. On December 6, registration will be available at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/hold-cooking-class-l58665>.

**Sustainable Holiday Décor**  
11 AM at Grace Farms  
Make one-of-a-kind holiday décor from living plants and other natural materials with the Grace Farms Garden Team. Tickets are \$50/person and available at <https://shorturl.at/X9f2Z>.

**The New England Academy of Dance Presents the Nutcracker Ballet**  
11 AM & 4 PM at the New Canaan High School Auditorium  
Attend the New England Academy of Dance's Nutcracker Ballet, featuring the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra. Tickets are available at [NEADance.com](http://NEADance.com).

**Broadway Inspirational Voices Christmas Concert**  
3:30 PM at Grace Farms  
Broadway Inspirational Voices returns to Grace Farms with a site-responsive program that connects us with the presence of the human voice to inspire the audience toward joy. The one-hour program features a holiday repertoire developed for Grace Farms by Connecticut native Allen René Louis, Broadway Inspirational Voices Artistic Director and GRAMMY®-nominated Creative Director and Producer. Tickets are available at <https://shorturl.at/z3yue>.

**Charlotte’s Web**  
7 PM at the Powerhouse Theatre  
The Children's Literature Association named Charlotte's Web "the best American children's book of the past 200 years". Joseph Robinette, working with the advice of E.B. White, has created a play that captures this work in a thrilling and utterly practical theatrical presentation. This is a beautiful, knowing play about friendship. Tickets are available at <https://tpnc.org>.

**December 14**

**The New England Academy of Dance Presents the Nutcracker Ballet**  
1 & 4 PM at the New Canaan High School Auditorium  
Attend the New England Academy of Dance's Nutcracker Ballet, featuring the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra. Tickets are available at [NEADance.com](http://NEADance.com).

**Charlotte’s Web**  
2 PM at the Powerhouse Theatre  
The Children's Literature Association named Charlotte's Web "the best American children's book of the past 200 years". Joseph Robinette, working with the advice of E.B. White, has created a play that captures this work in a thrilling and utterly practical theatrical presentation. This is a beautiful, knowing play about friendship. Tickets are available at <https://tpnc.org>.



# Calendar of Events for Your Fridge

**December 15**

**Open Bridge with the New Canaan Men's Club**

10 AM at the Lapham Center  
All are welcome to join in the fun and friendly bridge games. Les Kurian and Phil Evensen will provide supervision and guidance for all skill levels. Whether you're an experienced player or completely new to the game, you are welcome to join. You do not have to be a member of the Men's Club to play. Free. No registration required.

**Chair Yoga**

11:30 AM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett Auditorium  
With the support of a chair, this gentle Chair Yoga class will help you improve postural alignment, maintain pelvic mobility, reduce muscle tension and gain strength through flowing movements and focused breathing. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/chair-yoga-l66688>.

**Fit for Life with Mike**

12 PM at the Lapham Center  
This class focuses on upper, lower, and core muscle strength while emphasizing posture and balance. Participants use their own body weight and stretch bands in a power circuit of exercises. It is a dynamic and safe program, and every aspect is scalable to almost any fitness level. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**December 17**

**Open Bridge with the New Canaan Men's Club**

10 AM at the Lapham Center  
All are welcome to join in the fun and friendly bridge games. Les Kurian and Phil Evensen will provide supervision and guidance for all skill levels. Whether you're an experienced player or completely new to the game, you are welcome to join. You do not have to be a member of the Men's Club to play. Free. No registration required.

**Holiday Movie and Hot Cocoa | A Christmas Story**

11 AM at the Lapham Center  
Join for this fun Christmas classic, and enjoy some coffee, cocoa, cookies and company. Based on the humorous writings of author Jean Shepherd, this beloved holiday movie follows the wintry exploits of youngster Ralphie Parker, his brother and friends in the weeks leading up to Christmas Day. Guaranteed to warm your heart and leave you in the Christmas Spirit. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Billiards for Everyone with Mike Bacon**

2-4 PM at the Lapham Center  
If you're looking to have some fun, learn to play pool, or just play a game, join Mike on Wednesdays. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Journey into the World of Tea | Herbal Infusions**

3 PM at Grace Farms  
Explore the distinction

between tea and tisane. Taste hot and cold versions of different herbal blends while learning the origins of herbs and the different methods of preparation. Register at <https://shorturl.at/vlgny>.

**December 18**

**Life Reimagined**

1 PM at the Lapham Center  
Purposeful living promotes happiness, better sleep, longevity, a healthier heart and reduces the risk of Alzheimer's and other diseases. Hosts Marcy Rand, LMSW, Director, New Canaan's Human Services Department, and Robin Rockafellow, LCSW, will lead an informal and friendly group discussion of who we were, who we are, and the creative ways to explore our interests, abilities, knowledge, and activities in connection with the community around us. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**ChatGPT, Gemini, and Beyond: Understanding Today's AI Chatbots**

6 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room  
Join for an engaging and approachable overview of today's most widely used AI chatbots. This session is designed for beginners and everyday users, with no technical background required. Register at <https://shorturl.at/K5qyc>.

**December 19**

**COFFEE AND CONVERSATION**  
**8:30 – 9:30 AM at the Lapham Center**  
**Sponsored by the New Canaan Sentinel for a weekly community coffee and conversation.**

**Open Bridge with the New Canaan Men's Club**

11 AM at the Lapham Center  
All are welcome to join in the fun and friendly bridge games. Les Kurian and Phil Evensen will provide supervision and guidance for all skill levels. Whether you're an experienced player or completely new to the game, you are welcome to join. You do not have to be a member of the Men's Club to play. Free. No registration required.

**December 21**

**Poetry Reading with New Canaan Poet Jamie O'Halloran**

3 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room  
The New Canaan Library is pleased to welcome New Canaan poet Jamie O'Halloran for the official launch and reading of her recently published debut collection Ballast. O'Halloran will answer questions after the reading. Refreshments will be served. Register at <https://shorturl.at/Vbjhz>.

**December 22**

**NCHS Madrigals: A Holiday Performance**  
11 AM at the Lapham Center  
Celebrate the holidays

with the festive music of the NCHS Madrigals. This extraordinarily talented group of singers is sure to delight, as they perform a variety of seasonal songs. Light refreshments will be served. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Fit for Life with Mike**

12 PM at the Lapham Center  
This class focuses on upper, lower, and core muscle strength while emphasizing posture and balance. Participants use their own body weight and stretch bands in a power circuit of exercises. It is a dynamic and safe program, and every aspect is scalable to almost any fitness level. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**December 26**

**THERE WILL BE NO COFFEE AND CONVERSATION at the Lapham Center**

**December 31**

**Wellness Tea Retreat**

10 AM- 3 PM at Grace Farms  
Relax in the Pavilion and savor a flight of three Grace Farms wellness teas: Rest, Breathe, and Settle. The teas are paired with prompts for self-reflection, adapted from Grace Farms' River Retreat publication. Register at <https://gracefarms.org/event/wellness-tea-retreat/2025-12-31>.

## SAVE THE DATE

**January 2, 2026**

**THERE WILL BE NO COFFEE AND CONVERSATION at the Lapham Center**

**January 9, 2026**

**Health Talks with Shannon and Ellen**  
11 AM at the Lapham Center  
Meet up with Shannon and Ellen from the Health Department for coffee, conversation and snacks. These engaging discussions will help improve your mood and your health! Topics will be announced in the Lapham Center eblasts. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**January 14, 2026**

**Game Time with Mike Bacon: Name That Face!**  
12 PM at the Lapham Center  
Mike returns as emcee of Name That Face! Guaranteed to bring a smile to your face, as you test your recall and identify famous world leaders, authors, entertainers, scientists and others in this fast-paced contest. Lunch will be served. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Blood Sugar & Blood Pressure Clinics**  
12:30 PM at the Lapham Center  
Ellen Samai from New Canaan's Department of Health provides in-person blood sugar and blood pressure testing. If you plan to have your blood sugar level tested, it is recommend

you fast for four hours prior to testing. To register, call (203) 594-3620. Walk-ins welcome.

**January 15, 2026**

**Clever and Crafty with Tricia**  
1 PM at the Lapham Center  
Join Tricia to create quilling snowflakes. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**January 20, 2026**

**Lunch & Learn with Arianne Kolb, Executive Director of The Merritt Parkway Conservancy**  
12 PM at the New Canaan Museum & Historical Society  
Bring your own sandwich, soup or snack and join for a Lunch & Learn. Arianne will discuss the importance of the Merritt Parkway since its creation in 1932 and it's impact on travel in the Northeast and explore the intriguing history of one of Connecticut's iconic landmarks. Register at <https://nchistory.org>.

**It's Teatime!**  
2:30 PM at the Lapham Center  
Get out of the cold and enjoy an old-fashioned tea with friends. A variety of teas, sandwiches and teats will be served. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**January 23, 2026**

**New Canaan Sports Trivia Night Hosted by Terry Dinan**  
6 PM at the New Canaan Museum & Historical Society  
Join for New Canaan Sports Trivia Night. There will be a Mexican Buffet dinner and drinks (including beer & wine). This event is open to all ages. Register at <https://nchistory.org>.

**February 24, 2026**

**How to Use My Rec with Kathy Collins**  
11 AM at the Lapham Center  
If you've used MyRec to register for a program at Lapham only to find out when you come to the program that you were not registered, this talk is for you. Join Kathy to learn how to use this system to register for all your Lapham programs and activities. We'll review Step-by-step how to create an account, browse programs, add choices to your account, register and receive confirmation. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**April 17, 2026**

**Breeches & Bowties Spring Gala**  
Time to be announced at the Wee Burn Country Club  
Join the New Canaan Mounted Troup at their 2026 Spring Gala with guest speaker Drew Doggett. Tickets will be available at <https://newcanaanmountedtroupe.org>.

**May 7, 2026**

**NCNC Annual Lecture & Luncheon**  
11:30 AM- 2 PM  
Additional details will be

provided as the event approaches.

## BLOOD DRIVES

**Friday, December 5**

United Church of Rowayton  
210 Rowayton Ave  
Norwalk, CT 06853  
11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Saturday, December 6**

United Church of Rowayton  
210 Rowayton Ave  
Norwalk, CT 06853  
8:00 AM – 1:30 PM

Tully Health Center  
32 Strawberry Hill Court  
Stamford, CT 06902  
7:45 AM – 1:15 PM

New Greenwich Police Department  
11 Bruce Place  
Greenwich, CT 06830  
8:00 AM – 1:45 PM

**W e d n e s d a y , December 10**

Stamford Church of Christ  
1264 High Ridge Road  
Stamford, CT 06903  
8:00 AM – 1:30 PM

First Congregational Church of Darien  
14 Brookside Road  
Darien, CT 06820  
1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

## Support Services & Meetings

**December 19**

**Suicide Prevention Training: Question, Persuade and Refer**  
11 AM at the New Canaan Library, McLaughlin Meeting Room  
Those trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Register at <https://shorturl.at/jnvoQ>.

**February 19, 2026**

**Understanding Hospital and Subacute Evaluations: Purpose, Process and Patient Benefits**  
11 AM at the Lapham Center  
Ever wonder why hospitals and subacute care facilities conduct so many tests and evaluations? Join Kathy Collins to learn about the purpose behind these assessments, how they help ensure safety, guide treatment and support recovery. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Every Friday**

**AA Speaker Meeting**  
Wheelchair Access  
Fridays at 7:30 AM  
Congregational Church of New Canaan

**Every Saturday**

**AA Meeting-Sober Citizens Group**  
Saturdays at 9:15 AM  
First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan

**AA Meeting-Laundry and Dry Cleaning Group**  
Saturdays at 10:30 AM  
First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan

**Lost Then Found NA**

**Meeting**  
Wheelchair Accessible  
Saturdays at 7 PM  
United Methodist Church (back entrance)

**Every Monday**

**AA Meeting**  
Wheelchair Access  
Mondays at 7:30 AM  
Congregational Church of New Canaan

**Adult Child Al-Anon Meeting**  
Mondays at 12 PM  
St. Mark's Church, Youth Room

**Every Tuesday**

**Adult Child Alanon Meeting**  
Tuesdays at 12 PM  
St. Mark's Parish House, Conf. Room

**Every Wednesday**

**AA Step Meeting**  
Wheelchair Access  
Wednesdays at 7:30 AM  
Congregational Church of New Canaan

**Al-Anon Parent's & Newcomer's Mtg.**  
Wednesdays at 7:30 PM  
Silver Hill, Jorgenson House  
208 Valley Rd., New Canaan

**Every Thursday**

**AA Big Book Meeting.**  
Wheelchair Access  
Thursdays at 7:30 AM  
Congregational Church of New Canaan

**New Canaan Parent Support Group**  
7- 8:30 PM  
St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
New Canaan

## OUR NEIGHBORS

**December 12-14**

**New Haven Ballet presents The Nutcracker**  
Times Vary at the Shubert Theatre. 247 College Street, New Haven  
Join Clara on a dazzling journey through the Land of Snow and the Land of Sweets, performed by students from the New Haven Ballet School alongside New York City Ballet stars Harrison Coll and Sara Adams. A timeless tale of adventure, courage, and joy for the whole family. Tickets are available at <https://www.shubert.com>.

**December 13-21**

**A Sherlock Carol**  
Times Vary at the Westport Country Playhouse  
25 Powers Court, Westport  
Two literary legends collide when a grown-up Tiny Tim calls on Sherlock Holmes to investigate the mysterious death of Ebenezer Scrooge. This wildly inventive holiday mashup of Dickens and Doyle blends mystery, heart, and humor in a witty and wondrous theatrical treat. Tickets are available at <https://www.westportplayhouse.org>



Universal Crossword

Edited by Amanda Rafkin

ACROSS

- 1 Pear part  
5 Chiding syllable  
8 Matted clumps of hair  
13 \_\_\_ nuts (pesto ingredient)  
14 Exclude  
16 The \_\_\_ (customer's typical order)  
17 Merit  
18 Drag queen in "Kinky Boots"  
19 Mary Poppins, e.g.  
20 Near Batman's sidekick?  
23 Took off  
24 What do the pros say?  
25 Made a cozy little home  
30 Stockpile some yogurt starter?  
33 "Count" who composed "One O'Clock Jump"  
36 "Affirmative!"  
37 People with an annual Sun Dance  
38 Cheese that's made backward?  
39 Actress Dandridge  
41 Quick kiss  
42 Some body art, informally  
43 "Midsommar" director Aster  
44 Maya Angelou and Mary Oliver, e.g.

DOWN

- 45 Person playing marbles, often?  
49 Madame, in Spain  
50 Jump like a hare  
51 School fundraising grp.  
54 Anticipate the latest charts?  
58 Bulldozes  
62 "Enough stalling!"  
63 Isn't another way?  
64 JPEG or PNG file, e.g.  
65 Part of YOLO  
66 Taunt  
67 "Good heavens!"  
68 Genre related to reggae  
69 Concerning  
1 Pickle pie  
2 Pageant headwear  
3 2001 scandal company  
4 Restaurant list that might be accessed with a QR code  
5 "I knew I was right!"  
6 Campfire treats  
7 Unit of weight, for short  
8 Escape route in "The Great Escape"  
9 Allyson Felix's Olympic team  
10 "Sounds like a great time!"

DOWN

- 11 Pale brown color  
12 Cunning  
15 Soda can feature  
21 Word on a "Hello!" tag  
22 Occupied  
26 Daze  
27 Private student  
28 Construct  
29 You can stand at some while working  
30 Has the goal of  
31 Its capital is Damascus  
32 Still at Disney?  
33 Test versions of software  
34 "Better late than never," e.g.  
35 The Prince of Darkness  
39 Type of parrot in Blue Sky's "Rio"

DOWN

- 40 Make a mistake  
44 Salt-N-\_\_\_  
46 Wiped clean  
47 Comedian's "thing"  
48 Beverage often sweetened with honey  
51 Ballet bends  
52 Palindromic belief  
53 Lead-in to "physics" or "turf"  
55 Big ruckus  
56 They're not free of charge  
57 Mexico's \_\_\_ California  
58 Word aptly found in "perimeter"  
59 "Back to Black" singer  
60 Change directions suddenly  
61 Nwodim of "SNL"

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

O	M	E	N		S	T	U	M	P			T	S	P
R	O	M	E		M	A	N	O	R	S		E	T	A
B	O	O	S	T	E	R	S	H	O	T		E	R	
S	E	T	T	E	E	C	A	B	E	R	N	E	T	
	D	E	E	R		E	R	I	E		E	S	P	Y
					G	I	N	G	E	R	S	N	A	P
B	E	R	G		S	A	W			E	R	E	C	T
U	S	E		P	A	D		A	T	E		A	G	E
S	P	A	C	E		A	I	M		S	K	I	N	
			L	A	R	G	E	P	R	I	N	T		
B	M	W	S		A	L	P	S		O	R	A	L	
L	O	O	K	A	T	M	E		A	T	A	R	I	S
E	A	R		P	H	O	T	O	F	I	N	I	S	H
S	N	L		E	E	R	I	E	R		G	A	T	E
S	A	D			R	E	T	R	O		E	L	S	A

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Family Time Crossword  
The (K) Clues Are for Kids

Created by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

1. (K) Get twisted from heat  
5. (K) It's smaller than a bus  
8. (K) Face feature  
12. Maker of PCs and tablets  
13. Pie \_\_\_ mode (2 words)  
14. (K) "Crazy" in El Salvador  
15. (K) Saturn satellite  
16. Zip or zilch  
17. (K) Large bunch (2 words)  
18. (K) Place to order a BLT  
21. Music staff note after fa  
22. Babysitter's nightmare  
23. Bay window variety  
26. (K) Overblown view of oneself  
27. When doubled, a lively dance  
30. Got an eyeful at the mall? (2 words)

DOWN

33. (K) Negative prefix  
34. (K) Pick out and pay for  
35. Bandage consisting of a pad and belt  
36. Santa \_\_\_ winds  
37. (K) Article that many people read?  
38. Seller of many ties  
44. (K) Small equine  
45. (K) "... \_\_\_ the ramparts ..."  
46. (K) New York's 5-Down  
47. \_\_\_ for (picks)  
48. (K) Worker cleaning a plate with a little broom  
49. Disney's queen of Arendelle  
50. (K) A very disorderly room  
51. (K) "My country, \_\_\_ of thee ..."  
52. "Bill & \_\_\_ Excellent Adventure"

DOWN

1. Hospital section  
2. Massage target  
3. (K) Attachment to your fishing rod  
4. (K) Kept saying wonderful things about  
5. (K) Ear section  
6. Settled on a branch  
7. (K) City in North Carolina  
8. (K) Envelope feature  
9. (K) What you need to bury a rock  
10. (K) An idol  
11. "Believe it or \_\_\_"  
19. Aftershave relative  
20. (K) Uses a plane or sander  
23. (K) Have among your possessions

DOWN

24. Brazil tourist city  
25. (K) Hotel relative  
26. (K) Powerful suffix  
27. PC brain  
28. "For \_\_\_ a jolly good fellow"  
29. (K) Things that pop up on websites  
31. Don't just leave hanging in the closet (2 words)  
32. First word in many recipes  
36. Deep void or 9-Down  
37. Waterproof coverings  
38. (K) Optimism  
39. (K) "A Bug's Life" heroes  
40. Prefix for "half"  
41. Marine eagle  
42. (K) Part of a lemon  
43. Nay opposers  
44. Half of a cheerleader's prop?

Can you find the answer to this riddle within the solved puzzle?  
  
It works best when tired?  
  
Look for the answer in next week's paper.

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

12	D	I	P	S	4		S	N	E	1	S	E	M	I
13	I	D	L	E		D	A	Y		C	M	O	N	
15	R	E	A	C		T	I	V	E		O	U	R	S
16	T	A	N			A	T	E		O	N	S	E	T
18		N		E	B		L	A	N	E				
25	W	I	G		A	S	H	Y		H	E		Y	
26	H	A	N	G	A	R		E	X		H	A	L	E
30	E	R	G		R	E		A	M		A	S	K	S
31				S	C	A	D		U	G	H			
41	S	L	O	T	H		H		S		O	P		T
46	W	A	K	E		R	E	C	E		I	V	E	R
47	A	C	R	E		A	R	E		M	E	S	A	
50	B	E	A	R		W	E	D		P	R	O	P	

Previous riddle answer:

Creature with a lot inside?  
41-A) SLOTH

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1/12

Putting on a Front by Jon Pennington

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	
13					14			15		16				
17					18					19				
20				21					22					
23				24					25		26	27	28	29
			30				31	32						
33	34	35					36				37			
38					39	40					41			
42					43					44				
45				46				47	48					
49								50				51	52	53
				54		55	56				57			
58	59	60	61			62					63			
64						65					66			
67							68				69			

Horoscopes

Cosmic Context

The month begins under a waning-moon phase, following the full moon on December 4 — a time of introspection and clearing away what no longer serves. As the year winds down, collective astrological currents favor review, reflection, and preparation — encouraging release of old patterns and readiness for fresh starts.

the upcoming season with clarity.

Weekly Forecast by Sign

Aries (March 21 – April 19)

Expect a gentle pivot toward introspection. Let go of old habits that drain emotional or physical energy. Quiet reflection may yield clarity about what path to take into the new year.

Libra (September 23 – October 22)

Connections, collaboration, and shared intentions matter now. Reach out, repair what's been neglected, and offer openness over assumptions. Harmony benefits from sincerity.

Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

You may sense subtle shifts in inner rhythms — emotionally and mentally. Listen to what rises up, journal, or meditate. Insights gained now can reshape your outlook for the end of the year.

Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

Practical matters and daily routines demand attention. Slow down and reassess your schedule. Grounded habits now will set a steady pace for upcoming changes.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Opportunities for reflection around ambitions and long-term goals. Think through what you want to carry forward — clarity now can lead to stronger footing in 2026.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

Conversations or shared responsibilities may require clarity. Approach with care and honesty. Shared understanding now can ease future tensions and support collective effort.

Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

Inner growth and subtle transformation define your week. Emotional or spiritual clarity may emerge. Take time for rest, introspection, and gentle self-care.

How to Use This Week

Allow the energy of a waning moon and year-end reflection to guide thoughtful release and gentle planning. This week offers a bridge between what was and what's next — ideal for clearing, recalibrating, and preparing quietly for new opportunities.

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

You may feel drawn to deepen bonds with loved ones or close friends. Honest conversations can strengthen trust. It's a favorable week for nurturing what matters.

Gemini (May 21 – June 20)

A chance emerges to wrap up mental clutter — reassess ideas, projects, and direction. Peaceful routines and thoughtful planning set a steadier course for what comes next.

Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

Home, comfort, and inner balance take priority. Use these days to restore your emotional foundation. Time spent in solitude or with family may bring needed calm and perspective.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

Creativity and self-expression linger, but with more inward focus. Reflect on how you present yourself. Authenticity rather than performance wins — realign with what feels true.

Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

This week favors organizing and simplifying. Revisit plans or routines, clear what's outdated. A lighter load will help you embrace

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

- 1 intense (9)  
2 largest deer family member (5)  
3 casual outfit (9)  
4 hive workers (9)  
5 following a crooked path (10)  
6 takes a break (8)  
7 tool for "plumbing" (5)

SOLUTIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_  
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Previous Answers: 1. BOMBING 2. SEARED 3. RENEGADE  
4. INGRAINED 5. GLIMMERING 6. ANTIBODIES 7. PROPOSAL 8/24

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The answers to this week's puzzles can be found in the next issue on December 5.

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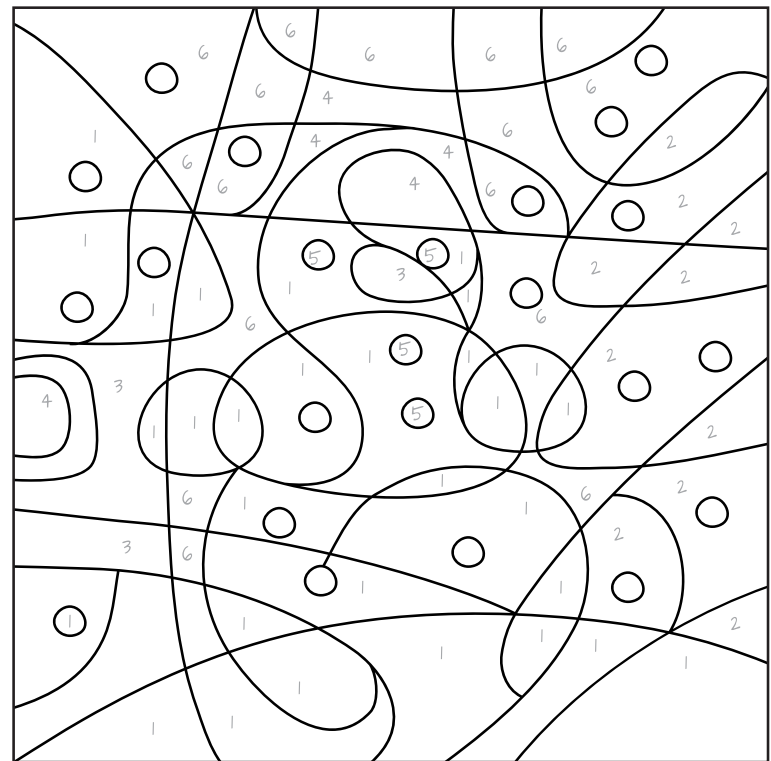
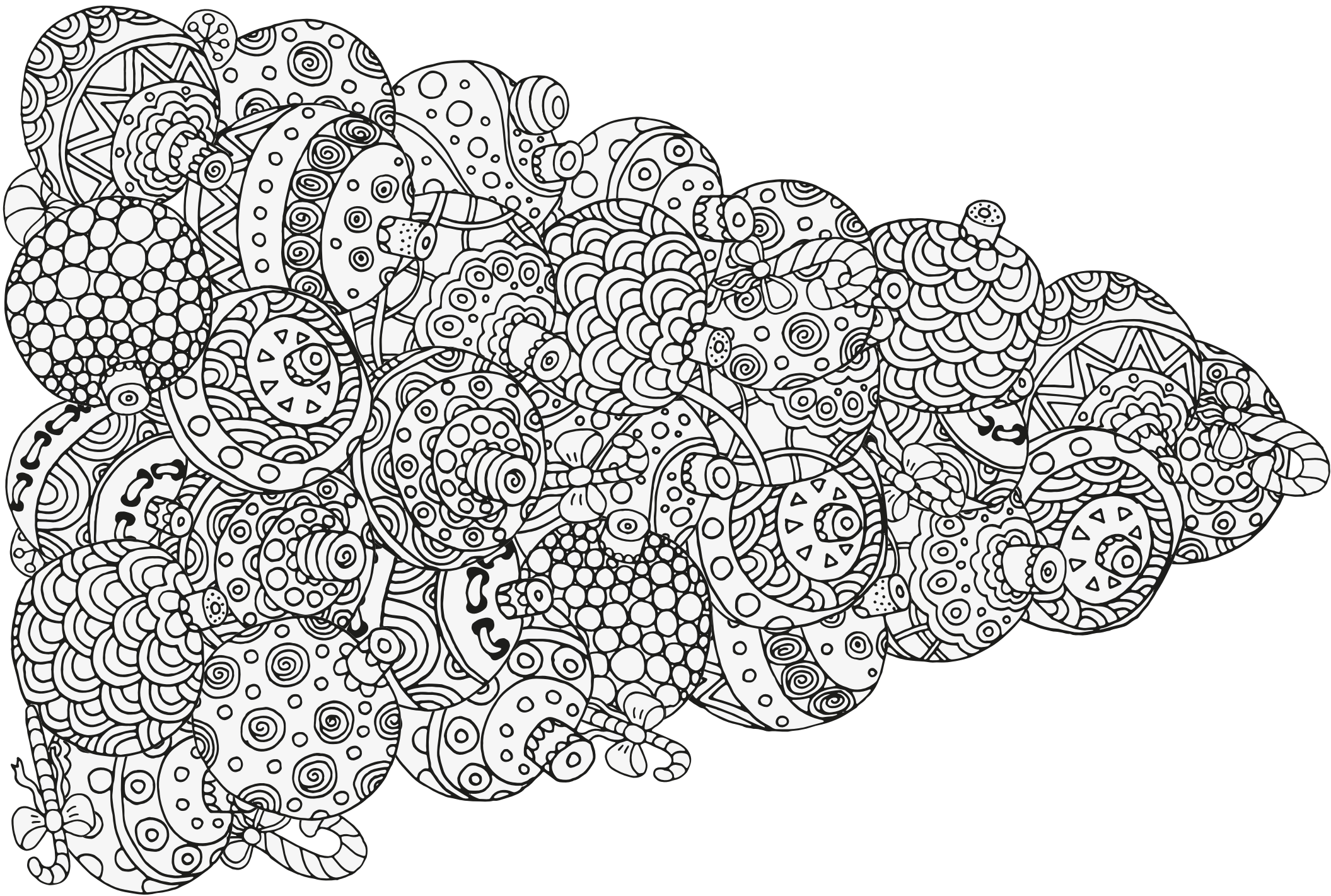
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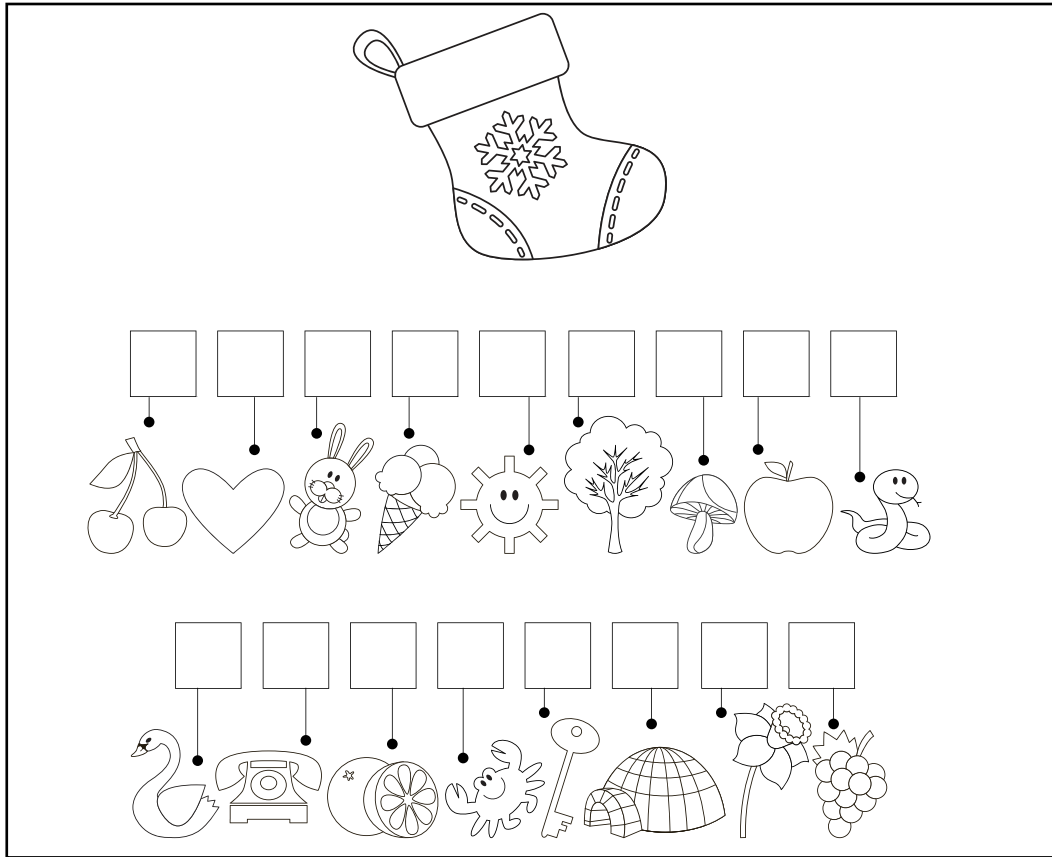
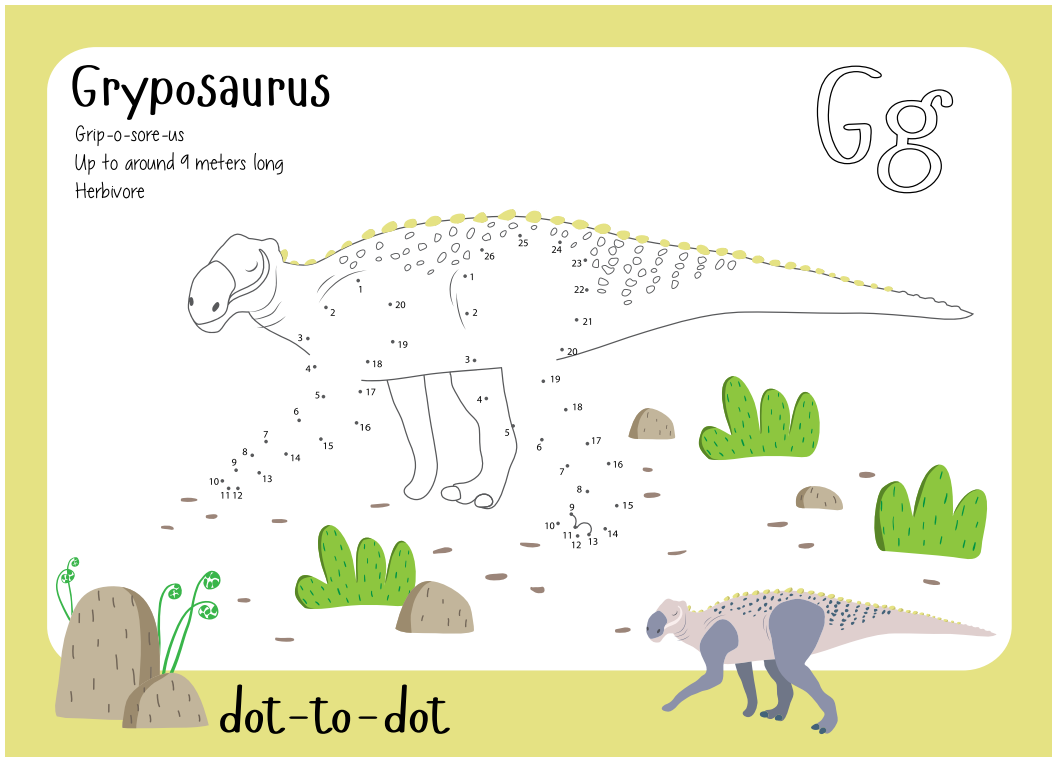


# MANDALA

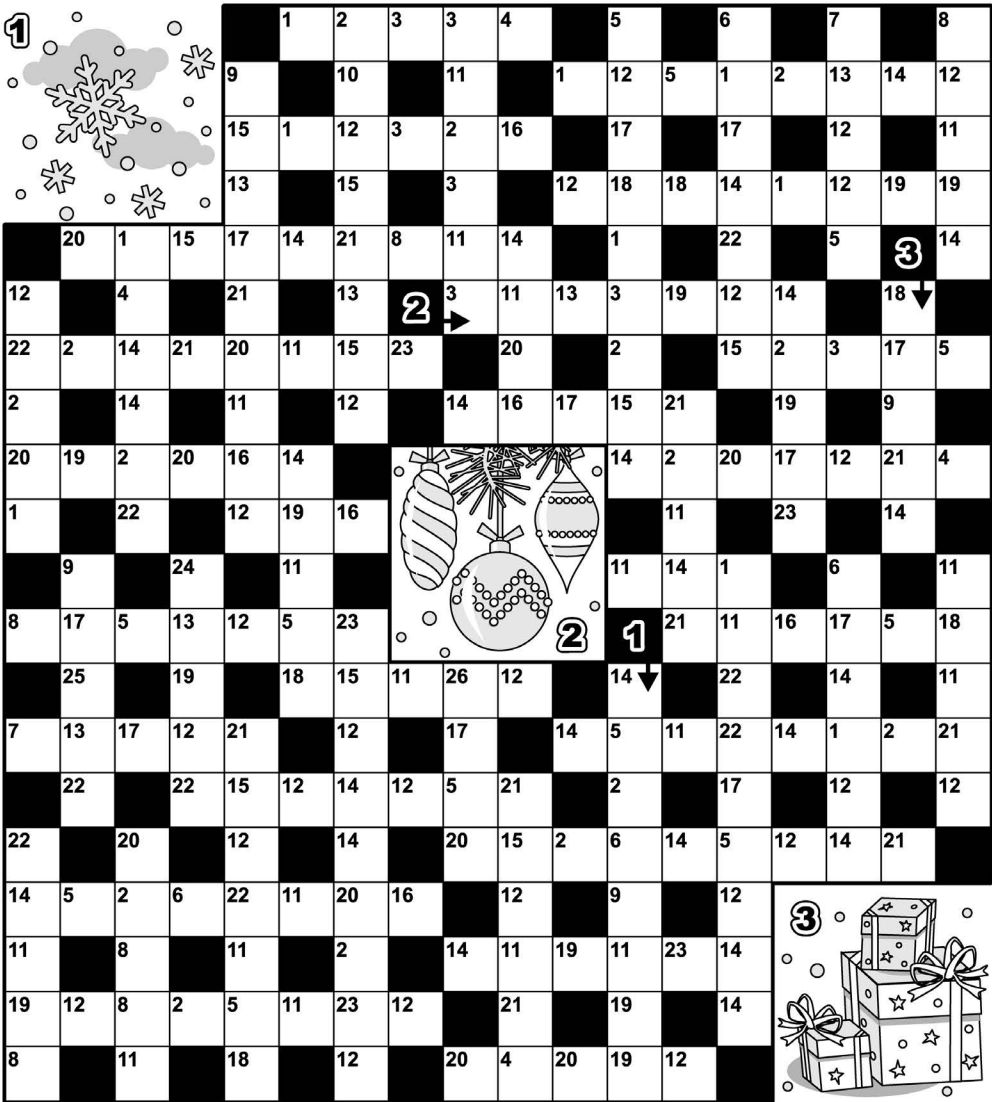
Coloring mandalas is good for your brain! Send us a picture of yours completed [Cordelia@SentinelHometownNews.com](mailto:Cordelia@SentinelHometownNews.com)



Color by numbers

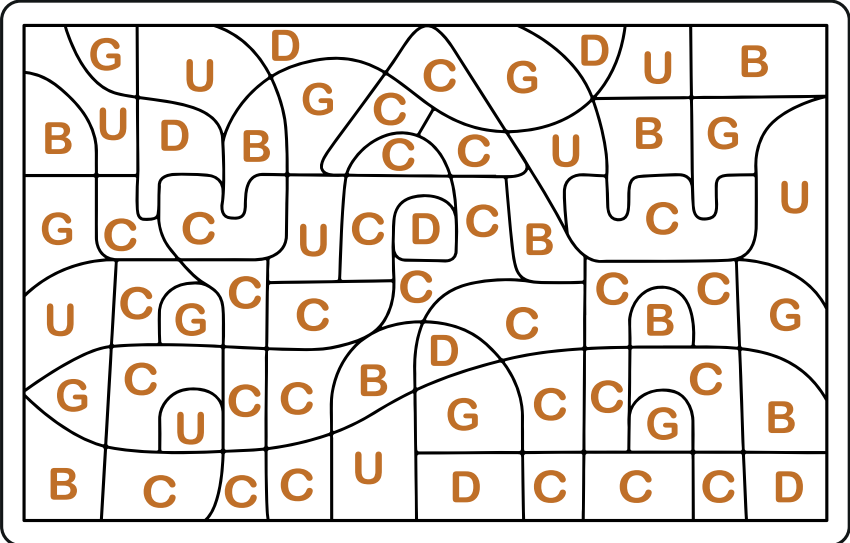


The same number represents the same letter. Crack the code and fill the grid. To help you get started some word entries have picture clues.

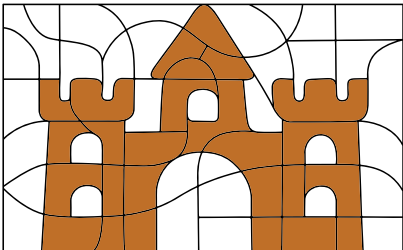


1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

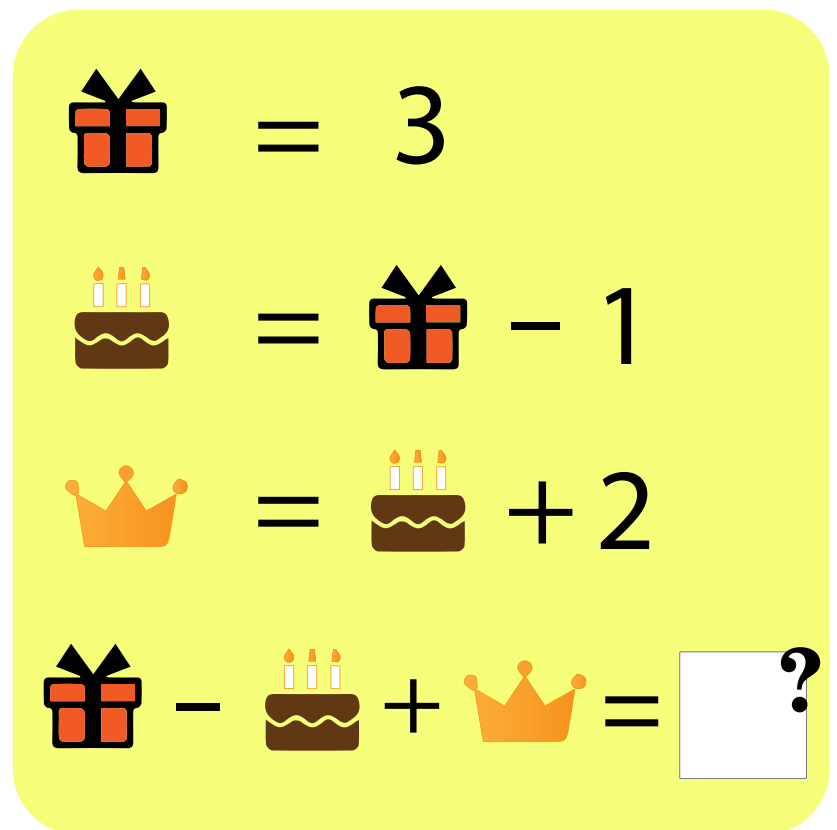
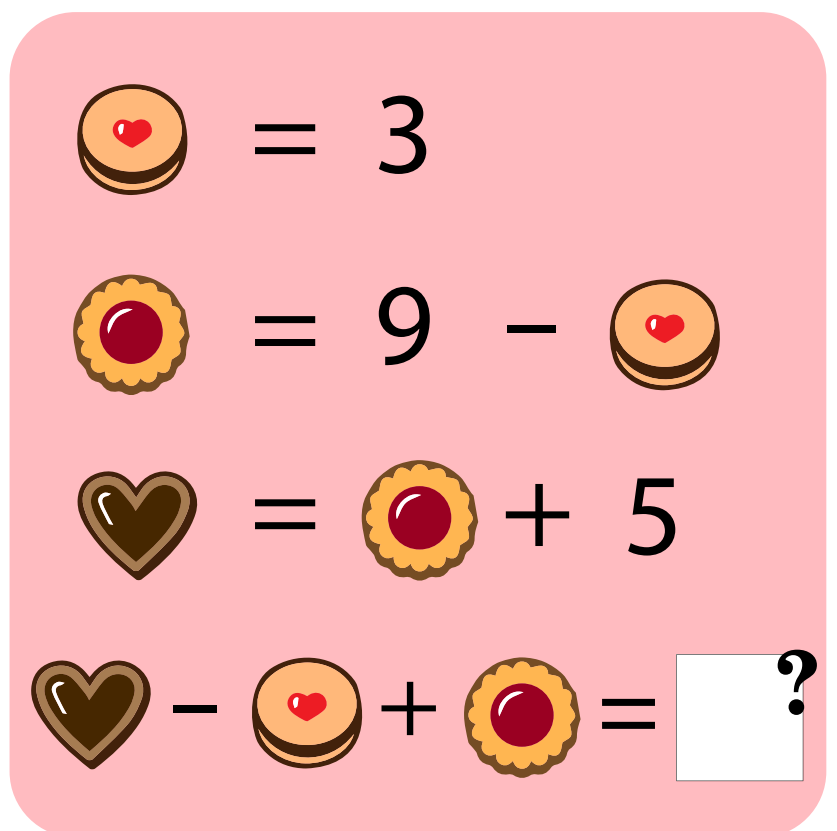
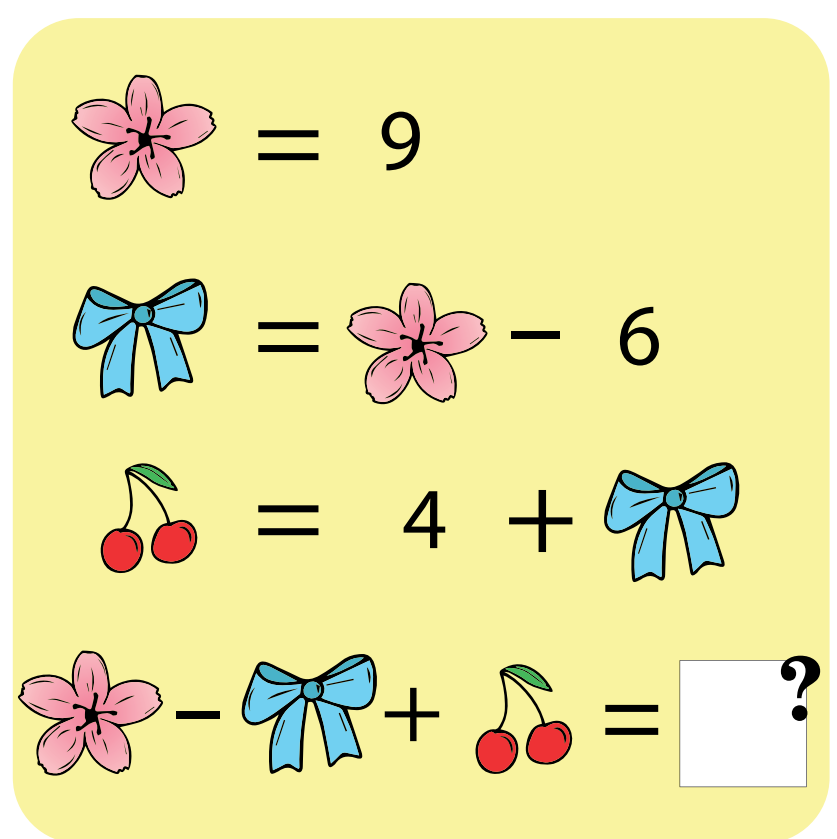
## COLOR BY LETTERS C!



Answer  
CASTLE









# BERMUDA<sup>AIR</sup>

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Make a two-hour journey feel like a world away  
with direct service from HPN.

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